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## RELIGIOUS NOVELS: MARIE CORELLI AND HALL CAINE.\*

Great and manifold—to speak with the translators of the Bible—as have been the mischiefs wrought by modern unbelief, it may be questioned whether any have surpassed the evils of the reaction which it has too often called forth. "Agnostic, positivist, materialist," are doubtless words of ill omen; but "hysterical, irrational, obscurantist" have scarcely a more promising sound. Between the Montagues and the Capulets of these extremes, fighting over her body, Religion seems likely to emerge disfigured and discredited—a caricature of the sublime and affecting reality which she once was, and as much an offence to her friends as to her enemies. The man who has escaped without a wound from Professor Huxley's onslaught may fall a victim to Miss Corelli's "electric creed;" or if not the man, yet the woman, though doctors have been known to succumb, and journalists, despite the triple steel of their art of criticism. And who shall reckon the misunderstandings which a romance so singularly fantastic as Mr. Hall Caine's "The Christian" will have created in the hundred thousand students it has won—persons innocent or careless enough to suppose that his novel is a dogmatic treatise drawn from the fountain-head of knowledge, and that his monks, canons, prophets, and mis-

sionaries live and move outside his chapters, in Eaton Square and in Bishopsgate Street? The so-called "bankruptcy of science," whatever lesson it may convey to professors overstepping the bounds of their method and its lawful acquisitions, would be dearly purchased by the degradation of Christianity. Religion is a reasonable service, not hysteria and not clap-trap. But the works which we have taken in hand to review insist that it is both. Deny them their hysteria, they would be destitute of force; forbid them their claptrap, and where would be their influence? A bold critic has thrown aside in disdain the novels of Miss Corelli, describing them as "ignorant and illiterate." We propose to make good this indictment. Mr. Hall Caine tells us that in "The Christian" his desire has been "to depict however imperfectly, the types of mind and character, of creed and culture, of social effort and religious purpose," which he thinks he sees "in the life of England and America at the close of the nineteenth century." We will ask with Horace, "*Quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor hiatu?*" How much of the current religion, social effort, and prevailing culture has been expressed in "The Christian?" And must we conclude that Mr. Hall Caine, as well as Miss Corelli, has, under pretence of showing us the orthodox creed in action, flooded the market with samples

\*1. A Romance of Two Worlds. And other Works.  
By Marie Corelli. London, 1896-1897.

2. The Christian. By Hall Caine, London, 1897.

of unscientific and degenerate mysticism?

*Place aux dames!* Let us begin with Miss Marie Corelli. She is now celebrated as the author of half-a-dozen volumes, multiplied in editions beyond our counting, which affect to promulgate the faith once delivered to the saints. They contain her dogmas and are the prophetical lectures of a London Hypatia, who does not blush when flattering judges tell her that she has written "the Gospel story, glorified, quickened, transfigured, stamped with an awful reality, instinct with life not before known." With incomparable modesty she suffers this praise to be printed in her volume called "Barabbas;" nay, more, she allows it to reach the following culmination, "What then? Is it inconceivable that the powerful pen of a cultured woman of genius should write a more potent picture of the World's Tragedy than was written by the fishermen of Judea?" In other words, the inspired record itself must pale before what an irreverent critic has termed "the aniline dyes of Miss Corelli's eloquence," and she does not refuse to be honored as a fifth Evangelist, superior to the other four.

But, when she was writing her preface to "A Romance of Two Worlds," she seemed willing to stand on a level with these fishermen. For it is surely her own office which she magnifies in the observation, "If ever there was a time for a new apostle of Christ to arise and preach his grandly simple message anew, that time is now." The message, in its grand simplicity, thou, "*Heliosas, atavis edite regibus*"—king, sage, and Chaldean—dost republish in a creed which extends over twenty-two pages! But the new commandment in which its issues may be reduced to a single line, "Cultivate the Electric Spirit within you." Why "electric," the reader may inquire. Because, answers Heliosas magisterially, God is

"a Shape of pure Electric Radiance," and if any doubt it, they "may search the Scriptures on which they pin their faith, and they will find that all the visions and appearances of the Deity there chronicled were electric in character." Neither the Chaldean nor Miss Corelli can understand why some have thought her electric dogma blasphemous, or how it should be a contradiction to affirm of the Deity in one sentence that He is a pure Spirit, and in the next that He is an emanation of electricity with a definite and measurable shape. Her creed, she declares, "has its foundation in Christ alone," and "its tenets are completely borne out by the New Testament." Moreover, the theory "is simple and makes all marvels easy"—without the inconvenience, we hasten to add, of being compelled to study mathematics, or define your terms, or distinguish between a current that runs along a wire and the intellect and will that have nothing in common with these imponderable agencies.

No, Miss Corelli's science, like her religion, scorns the fetters of philosophy and fact. When she has baptized a power "electric" she leaves it to explain itself. Sometimes it is a force, "*tout comme une autre*," and gives people a smart shock; anon it is "the germ of the Divinity within them," which is "capable of the highest clairvoyance and spiritual ability." We must take care not to confound it with hypnotism, for that, as we learn, "is merely animal magnetism called by a new name." The trance of the hypnotized is a "stupor;" but Miss Corelli's trance perceives the "Central Planet"—in her language a star and a planet are all one—shows her that "everything is circular;" makes angels and demons a "matter of experience"; conducts her heroes up from the earth to Saturn, Jupiter, and the Centre, but does not land them in the moon, for

the best of reasons: there is no moon—nothing except an “electrograph” which hangs delusively in heaven and somehow contrives to exert an influence on the tides. However, we should bear in mind that “the sea is impregnated with electricity.” So, indeed, are all other objects, and the Electric Circle “can do anything,” which will surely account for the Swedenborgian visions that enable Miss Corelli’s adepts to believe exactly in proportion as they have seen, to widen the bounds of celestial geography, and to put to shame the mere astronomer, whose telescope falls where ecstasy is triumphant, and will-power ascends the spheres.

And so, let us only cherish these germs, and we have Miss Corelli’s word for it that we shall behold the spirits as they float round our terrestrial globe—after which, what becomes of atheism and the atheists? For seeing is certainly believing, though we used to be told that it was not Christian faith. Moreover, if the doctrine of Hellobas may not be called spiritualism somewhat diluted with electricity—always conceived in these volumes as a “fluid”—would it be permissible to number it with magic and “miracle-mongering”? We gather from his wonderful sister, Zara, who has a zone of the deadly force at her disposal, that “it is nothing new;” of course, it “was well known to the ancient Chaldeans,” whose date and other achievements are left in a tantalizing obscurity; and “it was practised in perfection by Christ and His disciples.” But, alas, “civilized beings have forgotten all this.” There is not one of them, our author observes mournfully, that can so much as emulate “the human savage” or “lay back his ears to the wind, catch a faint far-off sound with certainty and precision, and tell you what it is.” Hence, we must not be surprised, though we may

be sorry, to learn that “they have forgotten the use of the electrical organs they all indubitably possess in large or minute degree.”

The miracles of the New Testament would seem, therefore, on this evidence, to be all reducible to a series of torpedo shocks; Christianity is a store of electric fluid; the risen Christ was Himself “embodied electric force;” “the descent of the Holy Ghost, by which term is meant an ever-flowing current of the inspired working intelligence of the Creator, was purely electric in character;” and “we believe”—that is to say, Miss Corelli believes—that since Christ ascended into Heaven, our electric communication with the Creator has been established.” Again, lest we should imagine these terms to be simple or crude analogies taken from earthly things—“Alles Vergängliche ist nur ein’ Gleichniss,” Goethe would say, but not so Hellobas—we are distinctly informed that “every thought and word of every inhabitant on every planet is reflected in lightning language before the Creator’s eyes as easily as we receive telegrams.” And yet, concludes Miss Corelli, with a tremor in her voice, the Electric Creed “has been much commented upon, and by some deemed blasphemous—I know not why.” Does her New Testament, we would ask, liken the Almighty to a man sitting in a post-office, receiving telegrams at a central station? And is that her view of omniscience? Who would not prefer the agnostic, that hesitates to declare there is knowledge with the Most High, to this grotesque and vulgar reminiscence of Swedenborg, which attempts to fathom divine mysteries by means of its “lightning language” and its “spiritual electricity?” Is the Supreme, after all, nothing but a “magnified non-natural man,” whose abode is on some “central planet,” which may be discovered if we travel

far enough in a motor-car? Truly, should these things find general acceptance, the refutation of materialism that ended in a gigantic electromagnetic coil would be little else than a casting out of Satan by Beelzebub.

In sober earnest, Miss Corelli knows not what is meant by materialism; and as regards her Christianity, it is a debased offspring of the Neo-Platonic school daubed with the colors of a hundred superstitions. It has not come out of the New Testament. Its origin and history may be traced through heresies without number; and the faith which it involves or demands is, in spite of her vehement protestations, the result of an hysteria so hollow and earth-born that it does not add one syllable to our knowledge of things divine. "Nel ciel...fu'lo," sings the Italian poet. Heliobas never was there. When Miss Corelli assures her correspondents that she knows the Electrical Creed to be a matter of experience, what are we to think? Has a single one of her acquaintance penetrated to the Central Planet? Or beheld the nations in Saturn and Jupiter? The amazing fact is that any reader should have taken "A Romance of Two Worlds" seriously. But then readers took Lemuel Gulliver seriously. And here is a clergyman of the Church of England writing to Miss Corelli that her imaginary voyage has preserved him from suicide. The end does not justify the means; one can but exclaim with Persius, "*Quantum in rebus inane!*" and marvel at the credulity of an enlightened British public.

But this "Romance" it was which announced to mystics, decadents and lovers of religious sensation that a new prophetess had arisen, a mother in Israel. Her mission was to preach against unbelievers, to pursue them with a flood of words, and to appeal from their arguments to the old experience, as she deemed it, whereby

the electric current was proved orthodox and the atomic theory an invention of Satan. Mysterious, indeed, are the differences that lurk in names and qualities. It is not easy to perceive how magnetism should be Christian, or electricity a thirteenth article of the Creed, or in what way "atoms" and "molecules" have sinned that they should call forth, as they ever do, the bitter scorn of Miss Marie Corelli. There is really nothing more sacred in energies which cannot be weighed than in molecules which submit themselves to the balance. Both are material, neither spiritual. And if we are going to deify the elements, or the forces behind them, why should not a second story-teller sing the praises of divine phosphorus, since without phosphorus we cannot reason or dedicate a volume of hymns to the carbon which is said to be an invariable constituent of organic life? Such undue favor shown to electricity gives Heliobas a suspicious resemblance to the Roman augur, whom Juvenal defines as "*aliquis senior qui publica fulgura condit.*" An astronomical Christianity may prefer this kind of lightning-rod for its minister; but how if the present craze about microbes should set up a biological religion, which, after all, comes nearer to our business and bosoms? Heliobas must then yield to a public officer of health, and the electric battery vanish before the culture of yeasts.

But Miss Corelli is not hostile to protoplasm; nay, in her innocence she imagines, as we gather from "Ziska," that it is a life-stuff without specific qualities; a sort of universal dough, out of which "the fibres of a conscious Intellectuality may sprout." Her model man of science, Dr. Dean, "a thoughtful *savant*," when he surveys the tourists that are preparing to ascend the Pyramids, is wont to murmur—

"Protoplasm—mere protoplasm! The germ of soul has not yet attained to individual consciousness in any one of these strange bipeds. Their thoughts are as jelly . . . Yet they are interesting, viewed in the same light and considered on the same scale as fishes or insects merely. As men and women, of course, they are misnomers—laughable impossibilities."

We confess to an uneasy feeling as we read these words—a "phenomenon" which Miss Corelli has often eloquently touched in her stories—as if we had read them somewhere before. Was it in Professor Huxley? But the Professor had a sound English style, and would not have called even these poor tourists "misnomers." Yet he certainly held a doctrine of the primeval jelly—once naming it *Bathybius Haekelii*—and the fishes, if not the insects, that were on their way to become living souls of men; which some denounced as Materialism and others embraced as Monism; and, in any case, it was Darwinism. Can it be that Miss Corelli is a Darwinian after all? Or merely that she has read of "protoplasm," and thinks it a comfortable word? We would remind her that Mesopotamia is more in her line; as again Juvenal observes—

Chaldaei sed major erit fiducia; quid  
Dixerit astrologus credent de fonte  
relatum.

Let her cling to Hellobas and give Professor Huxley a wide berth. It is dangerous playing with the edged tools of biology as with the school terms of metaphysics. Even the electric current is not so simple as it looks on paper. But who *was* Hellobas?

There is some ground for believing that his real name was not "pure Chaldee;" but even his pretended name we have never seen in a dictionary of that language, more properly known as Aramaic. He is said to be

the magnified non-natural copy of M. Joséphin Péladan, the French novelist and wizard, who calls himself Sar Péladan—as though Sardanapalus were his great-grandfather—and declares that he is the offspring of Assyrian kings, heir to the wisdom of the Magi, Grand Master of the Order of the Rosy Cross, an "éthopoète," and divinely appointed champion of Christendom. Like the painter called Raffaello—a word which may be Chaldee but is not Italian—in "A Romance of Two Worlds," he affirms that "actual beauty is sexless;" yet, on the other hand, like all Miss Corelli's pattern heroes and heroines, he holds a doctrine of heavenly counterparts which is akin to that of Mr. Laurence Oliphant, while exceeding it in strangeness, and one which we do not mean to expound. Each of his novels has in it a "Merodach," or ideal Orphic principle; and from Melchior, a fabulous name of one of the Three Kings, Miss Corelli cannot free herself, any more than from the mystic flaming cross and the Assyrian bulls. For him, as for her, the spiritual man can take up or lay down his body as he pleases, soar into space, submit angels and demons to his will, and work miracles. M. Péladan's heroes are well-born, benevolent, sinless, and on the side of the ideal. So is Hellobas. They talk without ceasing of angels, arcana, dualities, planets, music, magic, absolute being, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, and the Chaldeans. What is there left for Hellobas to add to the list? Not much, as is evident. But he can enlarge upon "soul-transmigration"—by one of those ingenuous slips which lead us to suppose that Miss Corelli has forgotten her "Mangnall's Questions." At all events, here we find too many coincidences for the calculus of probabilities to allow of no borrowing between these authors. If Sar Péladan is unacquainted with English and Hellobas

can read French, the signs point all one way. It follows that this much vaunted *Apology of Religion* is neither more nor less than a plagiarism from the latest school of Parisian decadence.

Miss Corelli has expressed her indignation that we, "in the insolent littleness of our limited thought, should sometimes presume to dismiss the Creator as no part of His creation." But we do and must, for it passes all understanding that the Creator should have created Himself, even as a part of something else. We think, however, that we know what our prophetess intends to say. She has a zeal against the "broadly materialistic views" now prevalent in certain quarters; and her cure for them is the ancient Gnosis according to which "all are born with a small portion of Divinity within them, which we call the Soul." That is not Christian teaching, but the perverse doctrine of Valentinus or Basilides, and may be read at large, with its confutation, in Irenaeus and other early Fathers of the Church. But Miss Corelli disdains Church and Fathers, for she goes on to tell us that, "with more than half the inhabitants of the globe, this germ of immortality remains always a germ, never sprouting, overlaid and weighted down by the lymphatic laziness and materialistic propensities of its shell or husk—the body;" and there are "multitudes in whom the Divine Essence attains to no larger quantity than that proportioned out to a dog or bird." So dogs and birds have the Divine Essence, too, only not in ample measure; and Christ is but "a portion of God Himself." As for the creation, it was a necessary act; man is made in the likeness of the angels; and every one has somewhere a counterpart, a *dimidium anima*, with which he constitutes one perfect being.

The planetary and electric wife of Hellobas, who comes and goes at un-

certain intervals, is named Azul. For some inexplicable reason Miss Corelli lays much stress on grave and circumflex accents, distributing them in the most unlikely places, but carefully avoiding the acute, as if these were atoms or molecules. And so we read of Azul, Niphrata, Zabastes, Raphon, Sah-Luma, Nirjalis, and Oruzel. These all belong, apparently, to some antediluvian dialect, the key of which is kept in the author's exclusive possession. The name "Ziska," which one feebly guessed might sound like Bohemian, is, we are assured, pure Coptic. And Lysia, Irenya, Nelida, seem as if they were Greek heard in a nightmare; but perhaps they are only prehistoric. To return to our angels: Although, did we found ourselves simply on the New Testament, we should believe that there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage in the world to come, and that good Christians shall be there "*sicut angeli Dei*," unwedded, yet to judge from Miss Corelli's electric informants, little else than matrimony occupies the minds of these spirits. They are sexless, indeed, and their behavior is meant to be edifying; but they abound in sentiment; and one of them, Edris, actually quits her home on high to put on a body, as though it were a wedding garment, and is married, without banns—nay, with no clergyman present—to the man of her choice, in Cologne Cathedral. It appears that by a strong exertion of electric power one can "draw an angel down," and keep him or her (these pronouns are embarrassing) far from the Sphere of Radiance, quite as if the Beatific Vision were a passing phase, and happiness, even for cherubim and seraphim, consisted in the *dénouement* of a three-volume novel. "Away in a sheltered mountainous retreat," says Miss Corelli sweetly, as she concludes the story of "Ardath," and "apart from the louder clamor of the world, the Poet

and his heavenly companion dwell in peace together." Edris is now "nothing but a woman." By and by she will be an angel once more; the same thing will happen a dozen or a million times—

Alter erit tum Tiphys, et altera quae  
vehat Argo  
Delectos heroas; erunt etiam altera  
bella—

and the bewildered student asks whether what he has read is Christian teaching, or a mixture of Buddhism with Alexandrian follies.

But the Electric Circle, which throws off good spirits as a burning wheel emits sparks, must be held responsible for another and a more gloomy kind; there are demons and lost souls, about whose doings Miss Corelli has her own sources of information. She would not be wholly in the tradition of her school did she feel no tenderness towards the "other side." Gnostics, it is a matter of history, undertook to rehabilitate or even to canonize such dubious personages as Cain, Esau, Judas, and Lucifer. The method has come down to later times, and the Paulicians set an example which the Hussites followed, of compassionating Satan as "one that had been wronged." To this length the rival of Sar Péladan is unwilling to go; yet she makes her heavenly voices call upon Lucifer as "beloved and unforgotten," while assigning him a task which is ministerial rather than rebellious to the will of the Supreme. She has pretty much absolved Judas, and her "Sorrows of Satan" reads often like a panegyric or apology of the infernal hero to whom it is dedicated.

At this stage we cannot but observe and regret the enormous harm done to feminine imaginations by George, Lord Byron, with his Corsairs, Manfreds, Laras, and Childe Harolds. These are still the favorite type—something akin

to Milton's Satan and the Wandering Jew—with writers in the Family Herald and with Miss Corelli. Between her demon—wittily disguised as Rimânez, of course with a circumflex—and her "senior in charge of lightning," the devout Hellobas, it is not difficult to trace a resemblance which trembles on the verge of identity. Both are princes of ancient lineage, fabulous wealth, and striking and stately appearance—dark, of course, as midnight. Both wear magnificent overcoats lined with sealskin or Russian sables. Both eat the most costly dinners. Both are fond of music, and quaff "Eastern wine," or Chamberlin, or Tokay, from goblets rich and rare. Both have a command of electricity that would make their fortune in the share-market. Both despise the scientific unbeliever and bring him to his knees by well-plied arguments; nor is there a pin to choose between the pyrotechnics of Lucifer which accomplish Mr. Geoffrey Tempest's conversion and the hypnotizing genius of the Chaldean who sends Theos Alwyn to sleep on the field of Ardath. Our sympathy on the whole, goes out to Rimânez rather than to Hellobas; for the Prince of Darkness, though too much of a courtier in these volumes to be quite a gentleman, has fits of Byronic moodiness which relieve the terrible monotony of his part, while the magician is almost a mountebank, and does nothing but talk. Neither has an ounce of malice in his composition. Lucifer wants to be saved, does his devil's business with a reluctance which is infinitely to his honor, and wears round his neck an inscription that may be interpreted "Beware of the dog." He is the tamest Mephistopheles that ever trod the boards, and his only idea of carrying the action forward is to propose lunch or get up a picnic with young demons for waiters. His Latin is a little faulty; when he de-

sires to bid his six hundred guests farewell, he puts on a transparency on which we read "Vale." Touching simplicity?

But the whole subject of languages in Miss Corelli would demand "a profundity of knowledge" far beyond us. Here is an example. "I do not address myself," she observes, "to those who have forsaken all spirituality—who have made their cold adieux to God"—a sufficiently remarkable process—"to them I say pitifully, '*Requiescat in pace!*' For they are as though they were not." So indeed they may be; yet we will ask, who is the subject of that astonishing *Requiescat?* And in what French author has she lighted upon the word "*diableresse*," which appears in "*Ziska?*" Where again, except in the sportive Thackeray, did she meet with such an expression as "*de rigeur*?" Is there a Roman name "*Galbus*?" There was an Emperor Galba, and a John Doe in our first Latin book called *Balbus*. And "*Volpian*" seems late, or even smacks of Italian. We need not shrink, however, while the "*Eton Grammar*" is at hand to bear us out, from asserting that the vocative case of Peter in Latin is not "*Petrus*," nor do we believe Pilate's wife ever addressed him as "*Pontius*"; and her own name "*Justitia*" gives us pause, for we always thought it an abstract noun until we saw it in "*Barabbas*."

Probably the finest thing ever done in this connection was to invent the compound "*Judith Iscariot*," as though Hebrews in the first century had family names like Smith and Jones, and "*Iscariot*" were one of them. Is not that "local color" of the deepest dye? In comparison with this triumph of audacity, what are the "chairs" that Heliobas could show, "of very ancient Arabian design," bequeathed by a people that never used any? Or the bells that rang out morning and evening at

Jerusalem, when church bells were not? Or "the veritable signature of Homer, which we also possess in another retreat of ours on the Isle of Lemnos?" Or the book of the "*Visions of Esdras*," consisting of "twelve moderately thick sheets of ivory," and engraved "by some evidently sharp and well-pointed instrument," in a "language only kept up among scholars and sages," and known as "the language of prophecy?" These are trifles, like the "small oval tablet of pure jasper" on which Esdras printed his last message, not yet discovered; but a name so original as "*Judith Iscariot*" belongs to Miss Corelli alone. Anybody, it has been well said, may write a religious novel; no one else could have given the world a "*Barabbas*." And Judith Iscariot shines on its breast, a gem comparable in lustre to the flashing jewel worn by Rimánez, by Zara, and by the priestess of Nágaya in Al Kyris.

From the "*Loves of the Angels*," sung by Tom Moore in verse not so embroidered as Miss Corelli's prose, we pass on, just glancing at the "shop fronts" in Nineveh—likewise a discovery of our author's—to the hatred which she displays whenever the clergy are mentioned, or physicians, critics, and professors of physical science. Wherein the clergy have offended may be speedily known. Among "two-legged pygmies of limited brain" they hold the first place—a bad pre-eminence. Miss Corelli has uttered no oracles more Sibylline than these frequent denunciations of man as a biped. Would his hypocrisy and his atheism offend less in Heaven's sight were he a quadruped? After all, he is not to blame for his anatomical peculiarities; they should be charged, we opine, on the Electric Circle. Every man, if he could choose, would wish to be what Nirjális was, "a pictured Dionysius"—or even "*Dionysus*," which is perhaps

the word that came flitting about Miss Corelli, but eluded her grasp. While, then, she waxes enthusiastic over "the immortal Byron" and praises "his well-braced mind," or pours out a lament for Shelley as one of her "inspired starvelings"—did she confound him with Chatterton?—or approves of the "remarks" of Socrates as being "all true and trenchant," her condemnation of churches and churchmen is unqualified. They must be reckoned among "the morbidities and microbes of national disease."

Take England for example. It is "a land where so-called religion is split into hundreds of cold and narrow sects, gatherings assembled for the practice of hypocrisy, lip-service, and lies." Clearly but few "psychists," or "human electricians," are to be found in such assemblies. Most clergymen, this charitable spirit assures her readers, "look upon their sacred vocation merely as a means of livelihood." Too often, indeed, if we yield her credit, have the Merodachs or Melchiors of the Rosy Cross beheld "a leering devil in a priest's disguise," though not perhaps falling into blank verse at the horrid spectacle. From certain tokens it would appear as though Heliosbas favored the Latin church with his patronage. He borrows a good deal of its ritual, yet rather loosely, for a boy chants the opening words of the "Credo" at mass; the choir and the organ recite the "Angelus" between them, which was never done except in this Armenian monastery; and prayers in church are directed to the cross rather than the sacrament. On the other hand, in "Barabbas" we are taught that Roman Catholicism is "the creed devised by him who did deny his Master"—a form of Apostolic Succession which will hardly be welcome at the Vatican, and embarrassing to controversialists all round.

However, if, as the head and origin

of the Roman clergy, St. Peter does not come off to their satisfaction or his own, St. Paul is in little better case. "It was St. Paul's preaching," says Theos Alwyn, and he speaks as a convert to true religion, "that upset all the beautiful pristine simplicity of the faith. It is very evident he had no 'calling' or 'election' such as he pretended; I wonder Jeremy Bentham's conclusive book on the subject is not more universally known." Is Jeremy Bentham also among the prophets? Then St. Paul may well be one of "those who profess to follow" the religion of Christ, "while merely following a scheme of their own personal advantage or convenience." Heliosbas explains, with Gnostic pride, that the Gospel was not left "in charge of a few fishermen or common folk only." There has ever been an esoteric lodge, "the Fraternity of the Cross and the Star"; and so we come round again to Sar Péladan. From this vantage-ground "the utter inefficiency of Christian ministers" will be painfully conspicuous. Rimánez himself declines to believe in the "clerical heaven," and caricatures what he has read of it in St. John's Apocalypse—again with the author's implicit approval. Thus her defence of the New Testament is complete. Having derided the Apostles, she feels no scruple in assailing their successors. For these are yet slow to believe in "the reincarnation of Araxes"; they do not understand what is meant by the cultivation of electric soul-germs, nor can reduce faith and charity to magnetism; they lay stress on "church dogma," and hesitate to reject "Paul's version of Christianity." From of old the Gnostic and the orthodox were enemies, and the Catholic faith was deemed incompatible with secret lodges of Illuminati and the calling up of spirits to give lessons in star-gazing.

A distinct feature of these ancient

heretics was their rejection of the Old Testament and its Creator, whom Marcion boldly styled "*malorum factorem*," the Author of Evil. Though it does not seem likely that Miss Corelli has come upon their writings, she has certainly grown tired of "monotonous sermons on the old Jewish doctrine of original sin and necessary sacrifice;" she considers it "both horrible and sacriligious," and "it has nothing whatever to do with Christianity according to Christ." She even ventures to say, as in presence of Calvary, that "no savage 'Jehovah-Jireh,' craving for murder and thirsting for vengeance, was the supreme Creator, but a Father,"—by which who can doubt that she is condemning not merely the sacrifices of Judaism, but the author of them? And in this frame of mind she publishes "Barabbas."

"Barabbas," according to the Newcastle Daily Journal, is "appallingly well written." We have quoted an occasional sentence from Miss Corelli's other performances which will justify the word "appalling;" but only a succession of pages would exhibit all it implies. There is a secret known to some writers—they belong very frequently to schools of mysticism—whereby the most luscious, scintillating and exuberant terms in a language are heaped together, until a sober man runs, to be delivered from them, "*ad Garamantas et Indos*," to Bradshaw's "Railway Guide" or Todhunter's "Algebra." It is the Turkey-carpet style in which "Satan" Montgomery abounded; and such is the style of Miss Corelli at her grandest. She is loth to employ one word where three will suffice. She gives us not only poetical prose, but line after line of blank verse, and breaks out into lyric measures at unexpected moments. "Deeper and deeper drooped the dull gray gloom" is a rhythm by no means rare in her dithyrambs. But she can also write in

stanzas, as thus, "A puppet whose wires society pulls, and he dances or dies as society pleases." The man so manipulated is Prince Ivan Petroffsky, "who likes to live and love and laugh," but whom Zara scolds for liking it, in patchwork monody of which these words are a sample. More subdued and pensive is a measure employed by Lady Sibyl Elton, "Away in the provinces—among the middle classes." But in her tragic night-scene with Geoffrey and Rimanez in the picture-gallery, she quickens her beat, and sings, "Polygamous purity is the new creed"—which we take to be dactyls, and a reminiscence of the classical metres. Sibyl, though every one dreamt she had tender feelings—it would be hard to say why—was indeed "the soul of a harpy, a vulture of vice," and came to a bad end, in spite of her rhythmical protests against society as now constituted. It was her husband, Geoffrey Tempest, who consorted with "blue-blooded blacklegs,"—an association from which no man could reasonably hope to escape without harm to his character and reputation.

"Ardath" and "Barabbas" revel in this very false gallop of verses, often not quite so tolerable as the right butterwoman's trot to market. "Afraid to move they knew not why, and waiting for they knew not what," Miss Corelli's readers must often, like Theos Alwyn, have yielded to the "always reluctant smile" which distinguished that ineffable person, but which they would fain not indulge while studying even a "dream" of sacred events. Yet who, without strong control of his muscles, could resist on meeting such Ancient Pistoiese as the following?—

"I will confront the fiend in woman's shape,—the mocking, smiling, sweet-voiced, damned devil,—who lured us to treachery. Judith, sayest thou?" Or this again, "To her the sensual priest—confided all his plan;—he

trained her in the part she had to play;—by his command, and in his very words,—she did persuade and tempt her credulous brother.” Or this, “Tear thy reverend hairs, unrevenger Jew,—thou, who as stiffnecked, righteous Pharisee—didst practise cautious virtue and self-seeking sanctity,—and now through unbelief art left most desolate.” Or this, “The devil in this fisherman will move the world.” Or this, “Take my advice and journey thou to Rome,—I’ll fill thy pouch with coin,—settle thyself as usurer there,—and lend out gold to Cæsar.”

Enough, and too much. Surely it is one of the strangest portents of a strange time that this fustian verse should be counted an improvement on the Gospel, and cried up as “the Contemplation of the Ideal.” Miss Corelli has chosen to write a miracle-play. We do not blame her for so choosing, had she observed the conditions. Her instinct did, in fact, warn her that to set any words of her own on the lips of the chief character would be thought sacrilege, and she wisely refrained. But she did not refrain from turning the “World’s Tragedy” into a tale of human passion, with Caiaphas for its hero and a raving woman for its centre of interest. She did not refrain from assimilating Christ to a “mighty muscular” Hercules and a “crowned Apollo.” She did not refrain from handling the Prince of the Apostles as a grotesque and ludicrous personage, or from making him the accomplice of Judas in his treachery. As might have been expected in view of her Gnostic tendencies—and an American journal perceives it without understanding that motive—her volume was sure to be “striking in its fresh and sympathetic representations of Judas, Barabbas and others”—a result gained by violent distortion of the sacred narrative and in contradiction to its spirit. For, if anything is clear amid the reserves and silences of the in-

spired writers, it is that Barabbas had neither part nor lot in Christian grace, and that Judas was the “son of perdition,” who in betraying his master had yielded to the avarice with which his hands were previously tainted. All this, forsooth, is now to be set aside and explained away in a glow of romance; and the redemption of mankind is to figure as an episode in a love-story on modern lines. Has so unspiritual a handling ever been dared by agnostic or infidel? Even M. Renan has kept this motive out of his too sentimental and Rousseau-like chapters. And no German has dreamt of employing it.

The persons are all conceived in that mood of hysterical excitement—we might use a stronger term—which is familiar to Miss Corelli. But many of them we know at once from her other writings. A thin disguise conceals Heliobas in Melchior, the inevitable Chaldean. Judith is the wicked soul of Ziska, who has exchanged the Pyramids for Jerusalem; and Barabbas answers to what Péladan calls the “inadequate man of fate, bewildered by social facts,” whom we have seen in Geoffrey Tempest. As for the historical realities, from Pilate to St. Peter and the Magdalene, they are subdued to the tone of melodramatic fiction in which they have been set. It is the Gospel as an extremely ill-instructed Apocryphal writer, bent on sensation, might have given it to us, if almost unacquainted with Eastern usages. A memorable instance is afforded by the scene in which Pilate washes his hands before the multitude. Miss Corelli has never observed how ablutions are performed in the Roman ritual, which perpetuates the custom of Orientals. She describes the Roman Governor as dipping his hands “deep in the shining bowl” and “rinsing them over and over again in the clear cold element, which sparkled in its polished

receptacle like an opal against fire." That mere outward show is all she can think of at a moment so solemn; but she has falsified the symbols. Had Pilate dipped his fingers repeatedly in the liquid he would have conveyed to the spectators, not that he was innocent of blood, but that he was bathing in it. She might have learnt from the Old Testament that water is poured upon the hands by a minister to cleanse them; but in her bold romancing she cares as little for the Books of Kings as she does for the Acts of the Apostles, which latter give in detail an account of the death of Judas simply fatal to her whole story.

So much for the "realism and reasonableness with which," according to one hasty critic, "the author has invested the narrative," and the "new set of motives for the betrayal." Her realism may be judged from the deliriums of Pilate, the erotic mania of Calaphas, Judith, and Barabbas, the mention of "angels" in the mouth of a Roman centurion, the bells that rang out at morn and eve in an Eastern city, the "sepulchre between the hills" in which Christ was laid, the copying of field lilles in wood by St. Joseph, against the express commandment of the law, and other details, great and small, which give to this apparently passionate description of an eye-witness all the unreality of convention. As regards the traitor and his action, those who will read De Quincey's celebrated essay on Iscariot may satisfy themselves that "the life of Judas, under a German construction of it," was long ago exhibited "as a spasmodic effort of vindictive patriotism and of rebellious ambition, noble by possibility in its grand central motive, though erring and worldly-minded." "All this, I believe, was originally due to the Germans," adds De Quincey; it cannot, therefore, be claimed by the author of "Barabbas," though she has rendered

herself liable for whatever degree of heterodoxy it may involve, and is thus a plagiarist of Rationalism, as in her doctrine of "soul-germs" and electric protoplasm she has unwittingly drawn nigh to the camp of Darwin. But beyond the Germans we can perceive the Marcionites; and the vindication, entire or partial, of "Judas the devil" goes back as far as the second century. That which Miss Corelli shares with no other mortal past or present is the "tale of love," at once modern and highly flavored, in which she has mingled the incidents of the death of Christ as if they were the proper subject-matter of a one-volume novel.

There are those who imagine that such writing implies a lively Christian faith in the story-teller and a certain devoutness in the thousands of her readers. But sentiment is not religion; nor is religion quite the same as "religiosity;" and fictions founded on Biblical narratives appeal to multitudes simply as new sensations, or as stage-plays, without serious meaning. They are not dogma, but legend and mythology. At the best they belong to the art of literature; at the worst they lead to the degradation of sacred themes for the purpose of "thrill." The effect of "Barabbas"—which is not so chaotic as various other of Miss Corelli's inventions—is much rather to excite than to edify. It is certainly an attack on the Old Testament; and we have seen what it makes of the New. Chief objects of its scornful invective are "Jehovah" and Peter the Apostle. And, in spite of St. Paul, we are required to maintain that "for ever and for ever, from this day, shall Israel be cast out from the promises of life eternal." It is not exactly pleasant to be quoting this convulsive blank verse, which begins anywhere, to end as the author chooses. But how is reverence for the Bible promoted by denying the Pauline theol-

ogy, or free-thinking discouraged by language like the following, which Miss Corelli, out of her teeming fancy, assigns to the high priest Caiaphas?—"There shall be no new creeds to conquer time; the one Jehovah shall suffice—the one revengeful, blood-demanding, jealous God—whose very name doth terrify the world." If we turn to the extreme left wing of heterodoxy—let us say to Flaubert, who was an ostentatious anti-Christian—we shall not hear language more violent or more Voltairean. The "Temptation of St. Antony" has its portrait of the God of Israel; it is hardly so forbidding as this, and not so intolerable a caricature of what the ancient Scripture teaches.

Not religion, but degenerate emotion, is therefore the element in which these miracle plays move, and their tone is that of erotic mysticism. Leaving out of controversy the Redeemer's figure—concerning which silence is the only fit answer to Miss Corelli, with her "Apollos" and her "statuesque forms" and her "marble gods of song"—let us consider Rimânez, the fallen spirit whose "sorrows" she has emblazoned. She looks up to him as a hero, writes his epic, defends him against the accusations of mankind, and appears to forget in what book he has been described as a liar and murderer from the beginning. To such lengths will Byronic sentiment betray the susceptible, whose leading principle it is that "Really, I cannot picture an ugly fiend," and "Nature is bound to give a beautiful face to a beautiful spirit." Hence "Ahrimanus"—who has got rid of his first syllable, and takes instead of it the operatic name Lucio—is incomparably the handsomest creature wherever he goes—a Don Juan who might, if he cared, become "*Lepouseur du genre humain.*" But he does not care. He hates women, and they adore him. Even Mavis Clare

thought Satan must be "a dangerously fascinating personage"—she never pictured him as "the possessor of hoofs and a tail"; and we must certainly agree when she adds: "Common sense assures me that no creature presenting himself under such an aspect would have the slightest power to attract." Lucio, therefore, had a "finely-shaped head," which was "nobly poised on such shoulders as might have befitted a Hercules;" in "Barabbas" another, not Lucio, was compared to Hercules. And the rest of him matched his fine head, but all in the melancholy and magnificent style of Lara. The demon "carried the visible evidence of wealth upon him," and a coronet on his visiting-cards; he called the Prince of Wales his friend, and he lived at the Grand Hotel. What a descent from the supernatural fiend of Marlowe and Milton!

But all the while, he was engaged upon a task as bewildering as it was contradictory. Whence derived? He must have borrowed it, we think, from Kundry, the mad-woman in "Parsifal." Judge, rather, as the French say. Mr. Max Nordau has given a rude but not inaccurate description of Kundry's business, which will fit that of Rimânez to a hair:—

"Not only," he says, "is Kundry not allowed to labor for her own salvation; she is compelled to employ all her strength to prevent it. For her redemption depends on her being despised by a man; and the task assigned her is to turn to account all her seductive power and win the man. She must by all possible means thwart him, by whom her redemption is to be wrought, from becoming her redeemer. If the man yields, she is lost, by her action, though not by her fault; if he resists, she is saved without deserving it, because she has done her utmost to seduce him."

In other words, the moral disposition, the good will and ethical choice of Kundry or Rimânez is to count for

nothing, while an external agency, the caprice or malevolence of somebody else, is to determine their fate. Where Richard Wagner found this extraordinary idea we cannot pretend to say; but certain it is that Miss Corelli did not light upon it in the pages of the New Testament. Yet her creed, of which it is a conspicuous article, often repeated, "has its foundation in Christ alone."

Rimânez is a music-hall devil, vulgar, flashy and given to slang, who can descend to speak of his guests as "grinning, guzzling, sensual fools," and who says of modern women, "they are merely the unnatural and strutting embryos of a new sex which will be neither male nor female." Lucifer and Miss Corelli are both apt, in their search after vigorous expressions, to fall into a style which leaves us afraid, with some amazement, lest our sense of what is Miltonic on the one hand or lady-like on the other, should be deserting us. There is the story of "Ziska"—we might term it a "pyramidal" romance, were we writing in her style—which will furnish abundant examples of what its author deems refined in the way of epithets; and we read in it of Sir Chetwynd Lyle, "the stout *parvenu* with his pendant paunch," as also of his wife, who is sometimes Lady Lyle, *tout court*, and occasionally Lady Chetwynde, but always "portly and pig-faced." It is irony, we know, when Miss Corelli declares that native Egyptians "ought to be proud to have us and our elephant legs;" and plain-speaking when Sah-Lâma calls Mr. Donnelly, of the great Baconian cryptogram, "a most intractable mule-head;" and delicate satire when Rimânez alludes to Sir Henry Irving as "one of my friends;" and the candor of science when Hellobas tells his lady patient, "There are many of your sex who are nothing but lumps of

lymph and fatty matter;" and Chaldean politeness which laughs at "poor mechanical Arabella Goddard;" and only Mr. Villiers, the critic, who remarks in private conversation that "Swinburne has certainly not much beauty." We may pardon some of these things, as "blunt and almost brutal honesty," indeed; but how can a fallen angel have so forgotten the splendor of Milton's verse that he comes down to rant and pantomime and the stereotype of the "London Reader?"

Sometimes he abounds in analytic propositions *à priori*, as when he informs us that women "are the mothers of the human race," which is, at present, indisputable, although one wishes he would not say it in verse. But he can also fling out a startling paradox. "Everything in the Universe is perfect," he says, "except Man," showing, we imagine, that he never has walked round a museum of anatomy or studied the lower creation in detail. He has a rhythm of his own, not always equal to the music in "Paradise Lost." "Remember," he cries, "the very devil was an angel once." He looks out on the world, and he cannot forbear exclaiming, "What a trumpery clod of kickable matter!" Miss Corelli despises Browning; but this loud line might be a quotation from "Mr. Sludge the Medium;" it has all his strength and idiomatic rudeness. We are at a loss to say whence this other is derived—perhaps it may occur in some collection of hymns, modern rather than ancient, but it is Prince Lucio who gives utterance to it—"The Britishers will pace the golden streets, singing Alleluia." And so much may serve on a theme which is inexhaustible. "Less than Archangel ruined" would be a very fit motto for the next edition of "The Sorrows of Satan." But a few touches might transform the hero to Hellobas

or a broad church clergyman who did not believe in everlasting punishment; and thus he would gain in logical consistency, while losing very little of his present fascination for the weaker sex.

We come, with a feeling of relief, to "The Mighty Atom." Here, at least, there will be simply a caricaturing of atheists and other undesirable persons about whom we can read in their own books, and so put Miss Corelli under cross-examination. Her intentions we need not call in question, and her purpose would be entitled to our sympathy, provided always that it were guided by knowledge and not likely to suffer defeat on the score of prejudice or incompetence. But a writer who has mistaken the dreams of the Gnostic for Christian truth, and in whose eyes Plotinus and Jeremy Bentham are Fathers of the church, while the Apostles were guilty of substituting their own schemes for the teaching of their Master, is not such as we should choose to measure swords with Agnosticism in any of its forms. When Ziska, the wicked, though right-thinking Egyptian spectre, has decreed *ex cathedra* that "Soul begins in protoplasm," the judicious are driven to look around for other champions against all-conquering Democritus. We may not admire "those self-styled Progressivists"—who do not style themselves so, but to whom Miss Corelli dedicates her volume; yet fair play is a jewel, and we were ignorant that even these gentlemen denied "to the children in board schools and elsewhere the knowledge and love of God as the true foundation of noble living." Our impression was that by law they could do no such thing, and that the Bible was read in Board Schools. Certainly no Board-School teacher would be permitted to denounce the God of the Old Testament

as a "savage Jehovah-Jireh craving for murder and thirsting for vengeance." Did Miss Corelli so instruct her class, the "Progressivist" would give her instant notice; and he would perhaps remind her that Mr. Huxley, zealous though he was for secular education, not only approved of reading the Bible in school, but had further written, "If I were compelled to choose, for one of my own children, between a school in which real religious instruction is given, and one without it, I should prefer the former; even though the child might have to take a good deal of theology with it." True, it may be that those "who assist the infamous cause of education without religion" are "guilty of a worse crime than murder;" but let us not denounce the Progressive as being one of them until he has shown his hand. Above all, if we are going to refute Materialism, we had better cleanse our own bosom of the perilous stuff before ministering to the minds diseased of our neighbors. It is every whit as unchristian to deify an electric battery as to explain the universe by atoms and ether without intelligence.

Whence did Miss Corelli borrow her "Mighty Atom?" We ask diffidently, for it is clear that she has access to authorities which are hidden from the average man. We were "dumbfounded"—to use her exquisite language—on reading of "Greek vestals in white," having always dreamt that vestals were Roman; nor did we recover when she pointed out to us "the classic contour" of a Highlander's head, and alluded to "his ancestors the Phoenicians." So that, for all we can tell, there may be a crowd of "Progressivists" who believe in that wonderful little First Atom, which, without knowing in the least what it was about, and with nobody to guide it, and having no reason, judgment, sight or sense of its own, produced

"such beautiful creations"—but we should like to see their names in black and white, if Miss Corelli has them among her treasures.

She does mention "a Mr. Skeet—he was a Positivist, he said, and a great friend of a person named Frederic Harrison, and he told me all about the Atom." Her model boy, poor little Lionel Valliscourt, aged eleven, whose witness we are quoting, goes on to remark that Mr. Skeet—

"showed me the enlarged drawing of an Atom, as seen through the microscope,—a curious, twisty thing with a sort of spinal cord running through it,—something like the picture of a man's ribs in my anatomy book,—and he explained to me that it was a fortuitous combination of such things that made universes."

Now one may be the friend of "a person named Frederic Harrison"—what charming Christian courtesy a reference like this displays!—and yet be no positivist. Moreover, the conception of "atoms," save as a working hypothesis, belongs to metaphysical science, which, like theology, the positivist declines to meddle with. And an atom which was marked down its back by a spinal cord would be no atom at all, but an organism, and subject to division. Lastly, fortuitous combination of atoms pre-existing is not "creation;" and the solely singular, blind little monster on which Miss Corelli pours out her wrath is a figment, perhaps derivable from Edgar Poe's "Eureka," but unknown to Comte, Spencer, Huxley and the "person named Frederic Harrison." It is notorious that by force of terms an agnostic cannot believe in the "Mighty Atom;" for he professes to have no theory of origins, and occupies himself exclusively with phenomena, in which order the beginning of the universe is not to be found.

Two questions may be asked by Lionel Valliscourt: "Is there an Intelligent Cause of things?" and "Is the Cause good?" The agnostic replies that he does not know. Why, then, make him answerable for the "Mighty Atom?" Professor Cadman Gore—nine-tenths an imbecile and the remaining tenth Dominie Sampson—is represented as saying harshly: "That there is a First Cause of things is evident—but where it is, and where it came from, is an unfathomable mystery." A First Cause that came from elsewhere would be, not a mystery, but a contradiction, and unthinkable. Yet, the Professor's eyes "rolled wildly in his head,"—could they have rolled out of it?—and he exclaimed: "You ask to know what no one knows"—which seems to be sound agnosticism; then he appeared to decide in favor of Mr. Skeet's "Atom," and finally he allowed that "an Atom may be a Person," although the suggestion "had something in it of positive terror." No, not finally, since he "almost felt as if he would like to shake the boy who stood there calmly propounding puzzles which could never be solved." That resembles the nescience from which he started. What, after all, did the "eminent pundit" mean? We are told in an earlier page that "Professor Cadman Gore had a terrible reputation for learning—all the world was as one mighty jackass, viewed in the light of his prodigious and portentious intellect"; but these self-destroying answers, given in a single conversation, fall below our hopes and leave us in the dark, not merely as regards the Atom and its doings, but with respect to the philosophy in which he was a proficient. These are not the "plausible modern sophistries" that clamor to be exposed and put down; they are the dreams of a fervid female genius who cannot distinguish one form of unbelief from another.

other, and who fancies that she can improvise an argument as she rushes along in a whirlwind of high-sounding and empty syllables. Invective is not reasoning, and when we hear of "a brood of atheists," who, like human cormorants, would be prepared to swallow benefits and deny the Benefactor, we are less moved by the implicit syllogism than amazed at the natural history of cormorants and their ingratitude, which, we humbly acknowledge, is new to us.

Miss Corelli has been struck with the sad consequences which are likely to follow upon a wide acceptance of the negative or merely natural creed. In this she is not mistaken. Observers from another and opposite point of view—we may site Mr. Thomas Hardy's novels in evidence—dwell upon "the chronic melancholy which is taking hold of the civilized races, with the decline of belief in a beneficent Power." It is not only allowable but in season, therefore, when such consequences are drawn out for public inspection, and though dramatically, as in a tale, yet they need not be falsely given. Mr. Valliscourt is the modern man of culture, who has put aside Christianity and taken up with we know not which variety of unbelief. The moral of his so-doing is suggested by his wife's elopement with a lover and his son's suicide. But does Mrs. Valliscourt leave him because of his atheism? Not at all; she is driven away by his cold brutality. And Lionel dies from an overwrought brain, want of companionship and his mother's loss. What has become of the argument? Nothing will persuade Miss Corelli that "logic" is not as detestable in a Christian's eyes as atoms with spinal cords between their shoulders. Yet if she would turn to the hated Stuart Mill—whose memory was perhaps not foreign to the making of this volume—

she might learn that when causes act in combination, to assign the effect to one only is inadmissible. We shall not know the precise hedonistic value of atheism—and with its pleasure or pain-giving capacity, like a true woman, she is chiefly concerned—until we have isolated it from Mr. Valliscourt's deficiencies of temper, from his wife's frivolity and from Lionel's enforced servitude to books. The method which her story ought to have pursued is at once more subtle and more dangerous than she imagines. She has overlooked her own doctrine; the devil with horns and hoofs is by no means attractive; we wanted here some of the fascination of Rimânez, not a narrow-minded, sour and tyrannical father, who might, though he had been a professing Christian, have laid his home waste by a display of similar qualities. If the unbeliever were always a Mr. Valliscourt or a Professor Cadman Gore the victory of faith would be assured and easy. But George Eliot was a disciple of Comte, and Mr. Stuart Mill has left us an "Autobiography;" can we draw from the reading of *her* novels or of *his* life an inference so triumphantly clear, so conclusive against them both, as Miss Corelli would have us derive from "The Mighty Atom?"

Taken as a whole, these religious romances would allow us to define their author in words which Mr. Huxley has applied to Auguste Comte, the father of Positivism. For she, too, appears as "a syncretic, who, like the Gnostics of early church history," has "attempted to combine the substance of imperfectly comprehended contemporary science with the form of Roman Christianity." But we question whether any Gnostic was so contemptuous of the science from which he distorted his ideas, or of the orthodoxy that lent him a semblance of religion, as Miss Corelli has shown her-

self towards Rome, St. Peter and the professors of protoplasm. We may venture on a hackneyed quotation from Tacitus which insinuates, "*Odisse quem laseris.*" For certainly the Church, the Apostle and the Science have suffered in the borrowing.

And what of Miss Corelli as an artist? "The last fifty years have produced nothing greater of their kind than the works of this gifted writer," says one witness whom she calls up. *What is their kind?* If it is erotic mysticism, clad in Lord Lytton's most gorgeous and falsely oracular colors, we want as little of it as possible. "Marie Corelli," another has observed, "is a word-painter of more than ordinary exuberance, and she is certainly remarkable in her choice of themes." She has a "picturesque fancy and fertile imagination." But she cannot draw from the life; her treatment is monotonous, her characters are all on the surface; they neither develop in themselves nor come out in action; and they fall into a few elementary types, which are repeated again and again. The exuberance that chokes at a first reading forbids a second. It is an overflow of words, combined with a rare paucity of ideas; "the homeliness of the sentiment stares through the fantastic encumbrance of its fine language;" and the painting, whether of scenery, dress or furniture, which takes up so many square yards, is not precise enough to leave an impression, nor characteristic enough to appear real. As for the dialogue, when it fails to be conventional or stage-struck it is vulgar; and in wit, humor, sarcasm and depth it is everywhere wanting. The author has meditated little and observed less. She affects to despise critics, but is always retorting upon them. In the extreme agony of a situation her heroine must talk about books. For herself, she cannot distinguish prose

from verse, but rambles between them, and fancies it a fine thing to go mad in white satin, like Tilburina in "The Critic." That intermingling of fancy, allusion and good sense which is the secret of an excellent style, no one could of course achieve who should start, as Miss Corelli does, with a slender outfit of knowledge, a passion for effect and a disdain of *la nuance* which is literature. Her good people are insipid, her bad ones less wicked than they pretend to be. In the wide range of these six or seven volumes—and how many thousand pages?—is there a character that will survive, or a sentence worth quoting? If "A Romance of Two Worlds" does not perish at once, the reason will be that seekers after new forms of religion care little for art in comparison with pretended lights from the unseen. If Rimánez continues to draw, we must allow something to the title, and more to the subject, however theatrically exhibited. And if "Barabbas" comes nearer to success than any other book Miss Corelli has offered us, the explanation may be found in her unusual exercise of reticence where speech would have been fatal, and in the nature of her theme, which compelled her to keep the bounds, unless she would ruin her narrative, the main outlines of which were already traced.

Let not the Lady Sibyl Elton brush these observations aside on the hypothesis that a critic who fails to admire is, in her refined speech, "fond of whiskey and soda, and music-hall women." Nor let her author fling them back as coming from one that has judged her books without reading them. Should Miss Corelli be writing another preface, we will ask her to explain how it comes about that Hell-lobas and Sar Péladan have so many features in common. To what chapters in the New Testament does she appeal as furnishing her with the

legend or the task of Prince Lucio Rimânez? Where is her warrant for describing the Holy Ghost as an electric communication between God and man? Where in the Christian teaching did she find the heavenly counterparts of Zara, Theos Alwyn and the rest of her entranced subjects? How does she reconcile her belief in the Bible with her language concerning the Apostles and "Jehovah-Jireh?" Is she aware that to say "the Soul begins in protoplasm" goes beyond any-

thing Mr. Huxley has advanced, though he expressed himself almost as incautiously? And will she have the great kindness to give, in public or private, the name and address of any man or woman that ever travelled to the Central Planet. We might extend these questions and add to them; but they are such as a writer with Miss Corelli's pretensions ought not to evade, and in answering them she will be faithful to her mission of prophetic enlightenment.

(*To be concluded.*)

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### TO MY SISTER.

From the city in a plain  
Where I linger, sore or fain,  
Let this token join us twain—  
"Gedenke Mein."

By the blue forget-me-not,  
And the pansy, color-shot,  
And the faithful lover's-knot—  
"Gedenke Mein."

By the nursery where we play'd,  
You a merry romping maid,  
I an urchin rather staid—  
"Gedenke Mein."

Children of your own to-day  
In another nursery play;  
Let our vanish'd childhood say—  
"Gedenke Mein."

By the garden near the sea  
With the stricken mulberry tree,  
Where your long legs flash'd at me—  
"Gedenke Mein."

Tho' the stricken giant died,  
And the sea we play'd beside  
Is the sea which doth divide—  
"Gedenke Mein,"

*Royalties I Have Seen.*

Tho' I fall a little lower  
 Than the promise of my dower,  
 And the harvest mock the sower—  
 "Gedenke Mein."

By the peace I must forswear,  
 And the hopes whose fruit you bear,  
 And the memories we share—  
 "Gedenke Mein."

*Blackwood's Magazine.*

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## ROYALTIES I HAVE SEEN.

The question whether he had ever met Prince Bismarck, once addressed by the present writer to the late Lord Granville, received from that statesman an answer suggestive of an interesting rather than an important scene in the Queen's private life abroad. Lord Granville seems only once to have met the Iron Chancellor of Germany; then only for a few minutes, and almost by accident. The erstwhile foreign secretary was in attendance on her majesty during one of her German visits, and waiting her appearance in a garden fringed by a dense shrubbery. To him entered the Prussian diplomatist, then, of course, known only as a rising official, and with all his great career before him. The conversation between the two was cut short by the English monosyllable, "Sharp," ringing through the air. That, it seems, is the slang word indicating the approach of the royal lady. Herr von Bismarck heard the cry, knew its official significance—in Lord Granville's words describing the scene with humorous simplicity—"took one dive into the shrubbery as if into a lake, and so completely vanished from my view for ever." Before that disappearance Bismarck had summed up to the British diplomatist his im-

pressions of the Prince Consort's character in the words: "The most remarkable combination of an entire absence of self-consciousness with personal dignity and intellectual power that I have ever seen among those born in the purple." Prince Albert died while the present writer was finishing his first term at Oxford. One's earlier reminiscences of that particular royalty who did more than any other individual of his day to educate English taste, as well as to affect the whole ordering of English life, must be rather of an impersonal sort. They were, indeed, of the sort which might have been conveyed by the small cartoons and the underlying legends in *Punch*; they therefore belong to most Englishmen old enough to recall the youth of the Prince of Wales. One heard much of the Prince Consort's punctilious insistence on all details of court etiquette, be the occasion a levee at St. James's, a visit to the opera, or an investiture of knighthood at Windsor. Most of the anecdotes, whose name was legion, illustrating this supposed attribute were probably apocryphal; they need not be revived, especially in a periodical published in the capital of the country where the real Prince Consort was

perhaps better known than he ever became south of the Tweed.

The earliest, if not the only, recollection of the husband of the Queen now occurring to me illustrates so aptly one portion of the estimate of him formed by Bismarck, and tends to correct so many misconceptions, that it is worth giving here. The Prince Consort's services to court economy and the better keeping up of the court establishment are familiar to all who care to know them from Sir Theodore Martin's biography. Less, or rather nothing, has yet been written about the personal interest taken by the Prince Consort in reorganizing the western heritage of his eldest son; in improving the collection of the revenues or the administration of the Stanaries Courts of the Duchy of Cornwall. While these improvements were being planned and carried out during the late fifties and the early sixties, it was the lot of this writer to be passing his young days in the extreme west of England. Than his old friend, the late Henry Sewell Stokes, no one was a better judge of administrative ability, or knew practically more of the working of the local judicature courts within the province giving a title to the Queen's eldest son. Even the official chronicle of the movements of the Prince Consort would be searched in vain for a record of the visits he paid to the west during several years, and especially about the time when the Prince of Wales was within sight of his majority. On these occasions the Queen's husband travelled with very little state. He seemed often to have with him no one but a private secretary and a body servant. During such a visit as this the Prince had made an excursion, certainly with only one of his suite, to the neighborhood of Torquay. Within a few miles of that place is the ruined Abbey of Berry Pomeroy, actually in

or very near to the rich pasture grounds watered by the prettiest of western streams, the river Dart. In the days now spoken of, the whole of this region was dotted by small farms, the farmhouse itself being very often a mere cottage, and the farmer being a laborer as well. The production of the thick clotted cream, called on one side of the Tamar, Devonshire, and on the other side Cornish, was and is among the native industries of these parts. The mode of preparation is the heating of the unskimmed milk in a broad and moderately deep pan over a wood fire on the hearth. The Prince Consort would seem to have watched, as he watched everything, this process in the farmhouses between Mount's Bay and Land's End, where his son's property chiefly lay. Strolling now near the abbey ruins just mentioned, the Prince passed a cottage farm, whose door was open, and on whose hearth was the clotted cream apparatus already named. It was in charge of a very small child, who could scarcely support the ladle with which she had presently to skim the contents of the very big pan. Visibly perplexed at the domestic task set her, the infant—for she was little more—was about to give it up in tears of despair, when she heard a kind voice, as of some one approaching her: "Little girl, I understand all this, and I will help you." It was the husband of the Queen, who had quietly entered, and who straightway began to show more practical knowledge of this hearthside business than had been displayed by another Anglo-Saxon royalty some centuries earlier, the King Alfred, who did not properly tend in the Athelney cottage the baking of the historic cakes.

This aptitude for the practical mastering of the details of any business, great or small, public or private, amounting with the Prince Consort to

genius, has notoriously descended from father to son. A single instance, under conditions very different from those just named, of the same sort of faculty as possessed and exercised by the Prince of Wales may be now given. During the earlier eighties, in the monthly periodical for which I was then responsible, Professor R. C. Jebb, to-day M.P. for Cambridge University, had advocated a scheme for the establishment of an English school of Hellenic studies at Athens, such as the United States, France and Germany had for some time possessed. If such an article were to lead to anything, it was necessary to have some sort of assurance of the practicability of the project. The minute and almost affectionate interest taken, for family reasons, by the heir-apparent in all sorts of Hellenic enterprises seemed likely, if it could be secured, to insure the success of the scheme. The Prince of Wales was warmly predisposed in favor of the plan. "Let me," he said, "ascertain what I should like to know of local feeling in Athens on the matter; we will then, if you please, call a meeting at Marlborough House."

Obviously this was a subject out of the beaten track, diplomatic or international, and therefore not quite in the Prince's normal line. Within a week of the notion being first submitted to him he had read up the subject so thoroughly as to be able to pass an examination in it at the hands of an expert even such as Professor Jebb. The steps by which foreign schools of studies at Athens had been formed; whatever related to their revenues or their management; the disposition towards the enterprise of Oxford, Cambridge, and of the learned bodies or individuals of London—all these things were exhaustively mastered by the Prince entirely by methods he himself had devised for his enlighten-

ment. Shortly afterwards, the meeting which the Prince had called was held in that room of his house employed for such purposes. Having taken up the matter warmly, he had found means of communicating with all the most distinguished men whose names as proper to be invited had been submitted to him by Professor Jebb and myself. The result was that an actual and a potential prime minister, Mr. Gladstone and Lord Salisbury, found themselves seated side by side. The Foreign office in London was represented by Lord Granville, who then presided over it; and our diplomatic body by Lord Dufferin, then on furlough in England. The presence of that accomplished man was associated with an agreeably humorous incident in the proceedings. After the Prince of Wales, Mr. Jebb, if I recollect rightly, Lord Reay, as the representative of cosmopolitan culture, and one of the house of Rothschild, which had subscribed liberally to the movement, had from different aspects exhausted the subject in the best of unpublished speeches I ever heard, there came a lull in the proceedings. Presently a sheet of foolscap paper was circulated among the company. On this it seemed to be expected, and as was supposed by royal order, that each of those present should sign his name. No one doubted that in doing so he was presenting his autograph to his future sovereign. A pleasant smile played upon the face of Lord Dufferin throughout this little episode. When the paper reached him, instead of writing his own name, having satisfied himself with the completeness of the list, he calmly put it into his pocket-book, then rose to say a few words on the possible advantages to diplomatic relations of that Athens school, whose success was now assured. "The fact is," as he explained at the time to a friend, "my

daughter collects autographs. I really thought this was too good an opportunity to be lost." His lordship had indeed made a most brilliant bag; the heir-apparent, having been let into the secret, completed the triumph of the diplomatist by adding the "Albert Edward" to the imposing list.

No better instances than those here chosen need be given of the combined industry, versatility, tact and varied knowledge of the eldest son of the Queen. He had, of course, as princes always will have, every opportunity for mastering the facts; but most of those facts must have been new to him when he first took them in hand. He had not previously displayed any of those archaeological tastes which his brother, the Duke of Albany, had shown; nor had the Prince in his speeches merely reproduced the substance of Professor Jebb's instructive and brilliant paper. The Prince's details about the work of other nations now to be emulated by England, were not only most pertinent, but absolutely fresh, and entirely his own. Some years before this, the late Sir Philip Cuniliffe Owen, who had worked with and under the Prince in every sort of way, had said to me: "If His Royal Highness takes up any subject, no matter what it be, he will carry it through, doing the work as admirably as it can be done. You need tell him nothing; he knows where to go for every fact, figure and person; if he wants anything, you will hear at just the right moment. But all this is conditional on one thing. The Prince of Wales likes a free hand, and to do things properly, he must be allowed to do them in his own way. But when he has promised to see a thing through you may with entire confidence leave it in his own hands, knowing that the way he chooses will certainly be the best." No better commentary on the wise truth of the strenuous, tactful

and kindly man who said these words, and who so long and so well carried on the work of Sir Henry Cole at South Kensington, could be supplied than is given by the foregoing incident.

During the earliest childhood of this writer England was full of the praises of the splendid presence, the grand manner, the more than royal generosity of our future foe of Crimean days, the Czar Nicholas of Russia (Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli both in later years spoke of this prince as the handsomest man they had ever seen). Shortly before the great Exhibition of 1851 the memory of a visit he had paid to Windsor was fresh. The press and the public could not find praise warm enough for the beauty of the jewelled snuff-boxes and other gifts bestowed by him on every one who had come near him. The next occasion on which the imperial name was much mentioned in England arrived during the bitter winter of 1854-5; then it was that Tenniel's superb cartoon showed how "General Février had turned traitor," and in the death of the Emperor of All the Russias we in England saw an omen of the coming close of the Crimean war. On a bitter spring day, with nothing but the calendar to remind one of the season, a successor of the Czar Nicholas was awaited by a sorely tried crowd of sightseers at Gravesend. The Queen's second son had just married (1874) the Grand Duchess Alexandrovna, whose imperial father was to escort her to her new home. Everything on that bleak, bitter March day seemed to go wrong. The steamer was late; the arrangements for landing were very imperfect; the Czar was invisible to all but a few. Those who saw him can never forget the handsome, but pale and worn face, with a settled expression almost of unhappiness, relieved only by a pathetic and softening smile, as,

while the sun for a moment peeped out from a cold gray cloud, the mighty potentate, stooping down, directed a fond fatherly glance at his daughter.

The old Emperor William of Germany must recall to many who read these lines the figure, stately in extreme old age, of which only the white head was visible to strollers on Unter den Linden at Berlin. One of his windows opened on the famous promenade. From it Prince Bismarck's great master was seen by me, as by hundreds of others, every afternoon during the early eighties. One reminiscence rather more definite and personal of the monarch may be given. He was announced to pay a visit to Baden-Baden while I happened to be staying there in 1879. Shortly before his arrival he must have accomplished a feat in a railway carriage which a "change artist" at a music hall might have envied. Only a few minutes before the train actually stopped I had, at a point on the line, seen him in the costume of an old gentleman *en voyage*. When the station was reached the Kaiser stepped forth on the platform blazing in a magnificent and bejewelled uniform. A little later on the same day His Majesty, once more in unofficial costume, was inspecting on foot the pretty things in the shops of the Baden Kursaal, rather suggestive as they are of a section of the Paris Palais Royal. Two peasants from the neighboring Black Forest, evidently a young man and his sweetheart, wistfully eyed some little object, timidly asked its price, and, on hearing it, almost tearfully turned away. The grand and kind old Kaiser had noted it all. The peasant pair had just reached the exit from the enclosure, when one of the people of the shop came up to them, placed a packet in their hands with some such words, murmured low, as, "By the will of the Kaiser."

Of foreign royalties, my impression is most vivid of the deadly pale, still youngish man, with a marvellously waxed moustache, whom I sometimes saw when, as a child in short frocks, I stayed with a relative in John Street, Mayfair. Once more only was I to behold this man on whose lip Europe had meanwhile so long trembled. It was in the September of 1870, after Sedan, when Napoleon III. was an exile at Chislehurst. At the moment now referred to he was driving down King Street, St. James's, no doubt on his way to the Army and Navy Club, of which he was once again made free; in that King Street, at No. 13, he had lodged in his early English days. As he passed he looked up, and read the blue plaque outside commemorating the fact. "I suppose," said a voice from the deferential crowd which had silently recognized the fallen Caesar, "he is coming to engage rooms at his old lodgings."

I often had occasion to approach in England the late Emperor of Brazil, the most early rising and polyglot of the earth's sovereigns. While the then master of the place was absent this imperial student had appointed to visit the Chatsworth. He reached the palace of the Peak soon after dawn, before the household was up, before perhaps all its members had quite settled to rest. The housekeeper, arriving on the scene, found a gentleman talking in a language she did not understand. Fortunately, Sir James Lacaita, the great linguist and librarian, was in the house, busy with the books. He quickly appeared, and addressed the visitor in French. The Emperor replied in Spanish, in which language Sir James continued. Italian was next employed; presently a particular *patois* of that tongue peculiar to a single district of Naples. It happened to be literally the mother-tongue of Sir James. Then came the

inspection of the books. The distinguished cicerone still kept his identity dark. The Emperor assumed the savant to be the butler; he asked as he

*Chambers's Journal.*

left the house: "Do all the servants of the Duke of Devonshire have to pass an examination in languages before his Grace engages them?"

*T. H. S. Escott.*

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### NICCOLO CENNINI.

When Margaret informed me that she intended to travel third-class from Naples to Messina for the purpose of studying human nature and gaining insight into the manners and customs of the Italian peasantry, I agreed at once and remarked that I admired her spirit. A disagreeable person might have associated this resolution with a recent purchase of mosaics and Roman pearls, but as no good ever results from being smart at a friend's expense, I made a point of taking Margaret's spasmodic economies seriously, and in this instance resigned myself to the discomfort with what good grace I might.

We booked third-class, therefore, and Margaret divided responsibilities by leaving me to wrestle with the baggage, while she strolled down the platform, peering into one carriage after another, with the object of choosing the most interesting fellow-passengers. Such, at least, was my charitable conclusion; but it would appear that her own comfort was an even more powerful motive, for she passed by parties of merry, laughing peasants, and reached the very end of the train before she beckoned me with an air of triumph.

"Here we are, the very thing! Two window seats and only one companion; such a nice, clean man!"

I toiled up, laden with possessions, and immediately upon my appearance "the nice, clean man" stood up to take one bundle after another from my

hand, swing them upward with easy strength, and pack them in the rail overhead. I was struck by his quiet, deferential manner, and when we subsided into our respective corners, looked at him with interest to see what sort of companion fate had given to us for the long night journey.

I saw a respectable-looking contadino, dressed in blue homespun, with a vividly white shirt, above which his sunburned face appeared even browner than ever. His hair was gray, his features grave and worn, and I put him down as sixty years of age, or even a little older. We were agreeably impressed by the man's personality, which was more than could be said of his attitude towards ourselves, for his assistance had been given in mechanical fashion, and the moment that we were seated he resumed that steady stare out of the window which had been interrupted by our appearance. He seemed more inclined to silence than the majority of his fellow-countrymen, but Margaret was bound to make some pretence of carrying out her purpose, so she coughed gently to attract attention, and remarked in her very best Italian that it was a beautiful evening.

It was a commonplace observation, but we were startled by the intensity of the reply.

"Ah, it is indeed a beautiful evening!" cried the stranger, and the emphasis with which he spoke proved that the words had no common sig-

nificance in his mind, though fine evenings are by no means of rare occurrence in Italy in the month of May. As he spoke he turned reluctantly from the window, and we looked into his face with a shock of surprise. The features were stamped with the impress of a great sorrow, but it was the eyes that held us spell-bound—brown eyes, liquid and beautiful as only Italian eyes can be, but with an expression of such infinite pathos as words cannot describe. His glance wandered from Margaret to myself, and dwelt upon us with the wistful appeal of an animal in pain, longing for sympathy, trembling lest its confidence may be misplaced, while we sat silent, conscious to the bottom of our souls of the gulf which yawned between this man and ourselves—we, with our petty trials and annoyances, worrying over imaginary woes, and vastly troubled because, forsooth, the trick did not always fall to our share; he, set apart in some desert of experience, branded by a suffering of which we could not even understand the meaning. We felt our hearts go out in a wave of sympathy, and made up our minds, there and then, to do all that was in our power to cheer the poor fellow during the hours which we were to spend together.

"We are starting on a long journey," Margaret explained as a preliminary; "all the way to Sicily. We shall be two nights in the train. I suppose you are not going so far?"

"Not quite; I am for Rosino, a village in the north of Calabria. I shall arrive about ten o'clock to-morrow morning. It is my native place. The signora has been in Calabria perhaps, if she is fond of travel?"

"No, I have never been so far south. We have been staying in Naples, and I am enchanted with the bay. Could anything be more beautiful than Naples on a moonlight night?"

"It is more beautiful in Calabria," he said simply. Then his eye rested on the bunch of flowers which she had pinned into her belt. "There are flowers like those growing near my old home, only larger. I used to gather them when I was a boy."

"Then I think we ought to share these now," said Margaret prettily, separating a few blossoms as she spoke, and holding them towards him with a smile. "Will you wear these in your buttonhole for the rest of the journey, to remind you of your home until you see it again?"

The contadino took the flowers eagerly enough, but instead of putting them in his coat, as directed, he cradled them in the hollow of his hand, as though in fear of damaging their fragile beauty, while ever and anon he raised them to his face to drink in the delicate perfume or to obtain a closer view of leaf and stem.

During the first hour of our journey his attention was divided pretty equally between the flowers, the scenery through which we were passing, and my bonnie Margaret herself, but there was nothing in his gaze to which the most rigorous chaperon could have taken exception. She was worth looking at as a picture of happy, healthful youth, and was moreover such a contrast to himself, such an essentially feminine little creature, that I did not wonder at his admiration.

It was evident that our companion possessed his full share of that love of beauty which is characteristic of his race, but for such an intelligent-looking man he was woefully ill informed, and his "I don't know, signora"—"I can't tell you, signora," began to have a monotonous sound in our ears. The explanation came at last, when I asked if there was a post van attached to the train, wherein I could deposit the card which I had just been writing.

"I can't tell you, signora," said the

contadino once more; then, looking at us very earnestly with his beautiful eyes—"I am the worst man in the world to give you information about such things," he said slowly, "for only yesterday I came out of prison, and this is my first day of liberty for twenty-six years."

It was a shock. We had thought of many tragic explanations, but never of this. A convict! and a convict, too, of the worst order, for twenty-six years meant a commuted life sentence, and life sentences are not given for light offences. It seemed impossible to associate the idea of crime with the face of the man seated opposite, but there was no discrediting his own words. We waited breathlessly to hear the nature of the offence for which he had been committed—to receive assurances that he had been wrongfully accused, and was the most ill-used of men.

None came. Neither at that time nor throughout the hours of the journey did he utter a word of excuse or exoneration; but the absence of any attempt to "talk good," or to prove that he had been unjustly sentenced, was more impressive than a hundred protestations, and made us feel that we had been fortunate in our choice of a travelling companion, despite the sins of the past.

It was some time before we could recover from the shock, but while the sad brown eyes searched our faces it seemed brutal to show any sign of discomfiture, and Margaret managed to conjure up the ghost of a smile as she asked where he had been during all these years.

"In the convict prison at Porte Feraleo, on Elba, signora. I came out yesterday morning, after having been there for twenty-six years and two months. It is a long time—"

"A long time!" echoed Margaret in dismay. "Twenty-six years! Why, it

is longer than I have lived—five years longer. I am only twenty-one."

The convict gave a flickering smile. Now that his history was known, and that he had seen that we did not shrink from him in consequence, he seemed to find relief in putting his thoughts into words.

"I was twenty-one when I went in," he said, "and now I am forty-seven. Ah, yes?" in answer to the astonishment on our faces. "I saw myself in a looking-glass for the first time yesterday, and I was surprised, too. For the moment I thought it was my father, and that he had come to meet me; but he is dead, and it is I who am old. It seems like a dream, signora, that I was ever young, but it hurt to see myself so changed, for all these years I have been looking forward and saying 'It will come! It will come!' and when I saw my face I knew that it was too late, and that the old life had gone forever....My wife will not know me. We have not seen each other since I was taken away. She is a pretty girl, poor Ninna! fair, like the signora, with the same blue eyes. But I am changed. No one in the village will know Niccolo Cennini now."

"But you are still young. A man of forty-seven has plenty of time before him. You must not lose heart just when the good time is at hand. You and your wife may have as many happy years together as you have had sad ones apart."

"Ah! who can say?" he sighed. "God only knows; but one always hopes. The bambino, my little girl, she is married herself. She was too young, when I left, to remember her father. Ah, signora!" and the intolerable pain of the dark eyes once more pierced our hearts. "They have lived their lives—it may be that I am not welcome! Sometimes I have thought it would be better if I never returned; but one dies

hard, one dies hard, signora! It is not with wishing that the end will come, and to stay away when one is free—it is not in nature."

"No, indeed, and it would break their hearts if you did. A woman can never forget her husband, and your wife will have taught the child to know you. They will have talked about you together every day of their lives, and now, depend upon it, they are full of happiness and excitement, longing for the hours to pass, so that to-morrow may be here!"

"Ah! who can tell?" he repeated again. "One always hopes. She was a good wife, and we loved each other, but—twenty-six years! It is a long time!" He fixed his eyes on Margaret's face as he finished speaking, as if something in her fresh beauty brought back the remembrance of the youthful Ninna whom he had left behind, and who was still in his thoughts a pretty girl with golden hair and clear blue eyes. It was easy to see that he was at once longing for and dreading the meeting which lay before him on the morrow, and perceiving that nervousness was momentarily increasing, we tried to divert his thoughts by calling attention to the beauty of the landscape through which we were passing. He listened politely, but in every instance the answer was the same, "Calabria was superior."

I pointed out the cattle grazing in the fields—they had a finer breed in Calabria. I prophesied a good harvest, from the appearance of the land—the crops were finer in Calabria. We exclaimed at the grandeur of mountain and river—they were higher in Calabria, wider in Calabria, grander, more impressive; until, at last, as the tears sprang suddenly to my eyes, he checked himself to say, with a sigh:

"Ah, well, it is a long time! Perhaps they have grown in my memory, but I

think they are all finer in my old home."

When nightfall came our ex-convict handed down shawls and rugs, and attended to our comfort with anxious care; but whenever I woke from my restless slumbers his own eyes were wide open, and once or twice I saw his lips move, and imagined that I heard the word "Ninna." In the morning light he looked gray and drawn with the fatigue of the long journey, and with agitation at the thought of the meeting so near at hand. We fed him with tea and sandwiches, and talked cheerfully to put courage into his sinking heart, but he was slow to respond.

"Twenty-six years, signora?" he kept on repeating. "They have lived their lives. Perhaps they will not care."

As we drew near his destination, Niccolo looked into our faces with an appeal which moved us strangely. We the acquaintances of a few hours, seemed in reality nearer to him than the dream-like figures of wife and child. He clung to us, dreading the thought of a separation, and when the train slackened speed at the little country station, he bade us farewell in trembling accents.

"When you first spoke to me I thought it was only right to warn you of my past; but I shall tell my wife that after you knew I was a convict, you still spoke kindly to me." His voice quivered. "It is not many pleasant things I have to tell her of these twenty-six years."

A group of country people were standing on the platform waiting the arrival of the train, and no sooner had it drawn up than carriage doors were thrown open, and the wearied travellers stepped to the ground to stretch their limbs after the long night journey. In a moment all was bustle and confusion, and Niccolo Cennini moved forward with uncertain footsteps, looking anxiously to right and left.

A priest in shabby black gown marched to and fro; a group of workmen talked and gesticulated in the foreground; and beside a pillar stood a peasant woman, her arms hanging slack by her side, a white hood fitting closely over her head. Her back was bent, and her face had the dried, weatherbeaten appearance of one who has worked beneath a burning sun, but the lips were set in lines of patient sweetness, and the eyes had an expression which Margaret and I were quick to recognize.

During the months which we had spent in Italy, one of our favorite occupations had been to watch the demeanor of the peasant women in the Virgin's chapels of the dim cathedrals. They came in from street and market, laying their burdens on the ground while they knelt in prayer before the altar, and when their devotion was finished, they withdrew to a short distance to meditate with folded hands and eyes cast down. The painted image of the Virgin looked on them as they sat, and it seemed as if some of her own sweet serenity of expression had passed into the patient faces of her worshippers. Margaret and I were good Protestants, but we felt many times that these poor women could teach us a lesson, and went away feeling ashamed of our selfish repinings.

This peasant woman cast a glance of kindly unconcern upon Niccolo as he passed, and he looked at her too, but only for a moment, for a group of tourists who had been blocking the way moved suddenly to one side, and he found himself standing face to face with a young woman whose tall finely formed figure stood out conspicuously among the crowd. She was a contadina, but dressed in gala costume, with white bodice, green skirt, and large silver pins fastening the plaits of her yellow hair. She carried a baby of a few months old in one arm, her

head thrown back on her full, handsome throat, and she scanned the windows of the train with curious eyes.

She was too much engrossed in her scrutiny to note the presence of the tall figure in the homespun suit, but in our promenade along the platform we were in full view of Niccolo's face, and could see that it was afame with joyful recognition. He clasped the girl by the shoulder, calling out her name in trembling accents.

"Ninna! Ninna! Do you know me? It is I—I have come back!"

The girl fell back a pace, and her cheeks flushed. She stared blankly at the gray head, the worn features; then the dark eyes met hers, and told the truth to her heart.

"Padre!" she cried loudly. "Padre!" and her voice was full of joyful certainty. In another moment they would have been clasped in each other's arms, but even as she swayed towards him, the girl checked herself with sudden recollection, and grasping his hand in hers drew him forward to the spot where the peasant woman stood in her working dress, turning her patient eyes on each new comer.

"Mother!" she cried, "he has come! I have brought him to you. Father is here!"

It was a critical moment, and we held our breath to see what would happen. Nothing in the world could have made the past so real to those two poor souls as the sight of the change in that other self with whom memory had dealt so tenderly. During the years of separation one illusion had survived in either breast, the image of the girl wife, the boy husband, who stood waiting at the end of the weary road. Ninna still saw in imagination Niccolo's crown of ebon curls; while the convict, grown gray within the prison walls, cherished the remembrance of a girl in the heyday of her charm.

What would be the result of the awakening? For the woman, one was safe to predict increased tenderness and pity; but—the man? The light died out of Niccolo's eyes as he beheld his wife; his cheek whitened as if some pale ghost had risen between him and a newly found happiness. His wife! Ninna! He stared in dismay at the bent back, the roughened hands, the scanty locks beneath the hood; but Ninna looked at him and smiled—a wonderful smile, sweet and steadfast, with the stamp of a lifelong loyalty, and at the sight an agony of tenderness contracted the man's features. He threw out his arms and staggered

towards her as a child might to its mother.

The little, worn woman opened her arms to receive him, and cradled him on her bosom. We could not see her face, for our eyes were dim, but we heard her voice, and the music of it is still in our ears.

"Niccolo mio! It was a long journey. Thou art wearied. Come home and rest!"

As the train moved out of the station we saw Niccolo Cennini pass along the country road towards his home. The child lay in his arms, and the women who loved him walked on either side.

Longman's Magazine.

#### THE FLOWER SELLER.

Myrtle and eglantine,  
For the old love and the new!  
And the columbine,  
With its cap and bells for folly!  
And the daffodil, for the hopes of youth! And the rue  
    For melancholy!  
But all the blossoms that blow,  
Fair gallants all, I charge you to win, if ye may,  
    This gentle guest,  
Who dreams apart, in her wimple of purple and grey,  
Like the blessed Virgin, with meek head bending low  
    Upon her breast.

For the orange flower,  
Ye may buy as ye will; but the violet of the wood  
Is the love of maidenhood;  
And he that hath worn it but once, tho' but for an hour,  
He shall never again, tho' he wander by many a stream,  
No, never again shall he meet with a flower that shall seem  
So sweet and pure; and forever, in after years,  
At the thought of its bloom, or the fragrance of its breath,  
The past shall arise,  
And his eyes shall be dim with tears,  
And his soul shall be far in the gardens of Paradise,  
Tho' he stand in the shambles of death.

*William Young.*

## THE BATTLE OF OMDURMAN AND THE MUSSULMAN WORLD.

In an article headed "The Pan-Islamic Revival," which appeared in this Review in October last<sup>1</sup> I pointed out how the Islamic world had been slowly but surely awakening to its sense of danger and responsibility during the last ten years, and how the Greco-Turkish war had opportunely facilitated the progress of the Pan-Islamic revival. I also made a few reflections thereon, to show how the several Christian Powers holding sway over Islamic people, and particularly England and Russia, were likely to be affected by that tremendous movement. Since then the most remarkable events concerning the Mussulman world have been the signing of an Anglo-French convention, by which an important Muslim empire (Sokoto) and its dependencies in East Africa have come under the direct control of the Queen-Empress; the cutting-up of the Celestial Empire into spheres of influence and opening it to the commerce of the civilized world, by which some fifty millions of warlike Chinese Mussulmans have come into direct political and commercial contact with the great Powers of Europe, which are vying with each other to establish exclusive influence over them; and lastly, the fall of the Mahdi, and the reconquest of the Soudan by the Anglo-Egyptian army under the Sirdar. Every one of the above events is of sufficient importance to merit an article for itself, in order to show its independent effect upon the progress of the Islamic cause and the prospects of England as the greatest Mussulman Power the world has ever seen. In this article, however, I shall confine my observa-

tions to the last, principally because of its urgent and pressing importance.

It has been triumphantly pointed out in some English and American journals that the war between the Mahdi and the Sirdar was a war between Islam and Christianity—that the victory of the Anglo-Egyptian army over the Dervishes was a victory of the Cross over the Crescent. A little explanation is necessary to expose this error. It is not generally known that the Mahdi had no political recognition whatever in the Mussulman world. He was an avowed rebel to the Governments of Egypt and Turkey. He had succeeded in organizing a number of lawless Arabs, who increased in strength with his successes, and defied the Turks no less than the Christians up to the last. It is true that Gordon had offered, in a letter, that the Mahdi should be considered the Sultan of the whole of the Western Soudan if he would accept certain conditions. It is not known, however, that Gordon had the authority of the Egyptian Government to recognize the Mahdi as a lawful ruler on any condition. The fact remains that the Khedival Government always looked upon him as a rebel, though it could not prevent him from being the *de facto* ruler of one of its own conquered provinces. The Egyptian and the Turkish Muslims, therefore, could not be supposed to have the least sympathy with the political ambition of the Mahdi. Not having recognized him in any way, the Government of the Khedive did not send any declaration of war to him before despatching the Anglo-Egyptian expedition to Khartoum. Little as he was politically recognized, religiously he was recog-

<sup>1</sup> *The Living Age*, November 6, 1897.

nized even less by the Mussulman world.

There is a tradition among the *Sunni* Mussulmans that a *Mahdi* (monitor, guide, or leader) would arise among them, in some unknown day, who would initiate the whole world into the mysteries of Islam, and thus obtain universal glorification for the God of the Prophet. Some maintain that there arises one *Mahdi* in each century for purifying the Islamic peoples and eliminating corruptions of belief from the faithful. The Shias believe that the twelfth Imám, a lost descendant of the Prophet, would reappear on some unknown day, and he would represent the real *Mahdi* or Imám prophesied. Mohammed Ahmed, the Dervish leader, claimed to be the real *Mahdi*. But to claim is one thing; to be accepted is another. Beyond the little knot of his followers no one recognized him as an inspired guide. Many Mohammedan journals described him as the false *Mahdi*, or the Pretender. His successor, Abdullah, who called himself a Khalifa, or Lieutenant of the *Mahdi*, was not even recognized by some of the followers of Mohammed himself. It is evident, therefore, that the Khalifa did not fight at Omdurman as a champion of the Muslim world or as a defender of the Islamic faith. The majority of the Egyptian army that fought so well against the Khalifa were Mohammedans. Surely they would not have fought against their own co-religionists had it been a war for the destruction of Islam or for the propagation of the Cross. At the present moment the Khedival Crescent, along with the Union Jack, is floating over the ruins of Khartoum.

But, though there was no recognition of the *Mahdi's* rule and no veneration for his person, the splendid valor, the unexampled fortitude and devotion, the unsurpassed resignation

and courage which the Dervishes displayed in the field have won for them universal sympathy and respect. The hearts of all lovers of martial qualities, and particularly of the Mussulmans, are filled with pride at the heroic deeds of the Soudanese Arabs. As one of the war correspondents has impartially observed: "Such acts of bravery have never been known in history or romance." Right or wrong, the Dervishes sincerely believed that they were fighting for their faith and fatherland. One may strongly denounce the *Mahdi*, but one can hardly withhold sympathy from his ignorant followers. Nothing can describe their condition better than the immortal verses of the late Laureate:

Cannon to right of them,  
Cannon to left of them,  
Cannon in front of them,  
Volley'd and thundered;  
Stormed at with shot and shell,  
Boldly they rode and well  
Into the jaws of Death.

When Mūslims heard the account of the two hundred Dervishes gathering round their black flag, refusing to part with it, but courting death to save it, their last survivor bleeding from unnumbered wounds, standing motionless like a statue and expiring flag in hand, many a silent tear fell from their eyes. When the numbers of the dead and wounded in the Dervish camp became known (eleven thousand killed and sixteen thousand wounded), a shudder went round the Mussulman world, none the less painful because the majority of the efficient army opposed to the Dervishes was composed of Mūslims. The Egyptians and the Turks, who had every reason to crush the power of the *Mahdi*, perhaps felt more than any other section of the Mūslims the unexpectedly fearful loss of Mūslim lives.

As the correspondents have de-

scribed, it was most painful for the English to shoot down such brave foes. How much more painful would it have been for the Egyptians to annihilate their fellow believers before they ever got any chance to retaliate at all! Modern history does not record a single instance of such a tremendous loss of life, on one side only, in a single battle of a few hours' duration. It is no wonder that some Muslim soldiers, after reading the account of the battle, cried aloud, "Would that such brave people had possessed modern guns in order to provide better sport to their equally brave enemy!"

That remark brings me to the consideration of one of the first lessons learnt by Muslim monarchs and statesmen from the battle on the Nile. It has been proved once more, if indeed it needed proof, that Mohammedans have preserved intact the conviction in the truth of their religion, of which they have been always proud, and also all the martial qualities which they have inherited from their forefathers, and by which they once acquired a world-wide empire.

Mohammedan statesmen know that the Dervishes are the direct descendants of the Arabs who conquered Syria and Egypt during the Khalifate of Omar, and that they have lost neither the physique nor the religious zeal which characterized their distinguished ancestors. Yet all their martial qualities failed to bring them victory—nay, were altogether useless in preventing their utter annihilation. It was not altogether a victory of mind over matter, as has been remarked by some critics; because the Dervishes showed a great many qualities of the mind, and the Anglo-Egyptian army possessed some matter of a splendid kind. It was a victory of the latest scientific instruments well directed, and of military discipline well maintained, over swords and spears in

the hands of splendid hordes of men, whose nearest approach to the enemy was about a thousand yards from the guns. Before they had time to think whence the storm of shot and shell arrived, or an opportunity for the use of their weapons, they were entirely destroyed. Muslim statesmen knew also that not far from the scene of the Dervish battle and destruction a great European army, quite as well armed as the Sirdar's force, and equally well generalised, had come to grief when opposed by a portion of the army of the Abyssinians, who were decidedly inferior in personal valor and physique to the Dervishes, and only slightly superior to them in a veneer of civilization. The Abyssinians were well trained in the use of rifles and—thanks to Russia and France—were well provided with the latest guns. That advantage, however, made all the difference in the world—it gave the nation of the Negus a place among the powerful nations of the globe; the absence of it, on the other hand, effaced the dominion of the Mahdi from the map of the Dark Continent.

Muslims cannot help comparing the result of the Anglo-Indian expedition into the country of the Afridis with that of the Anglo-Egyptian expedition into the land of the Baghāras. Intellectually, perhaps, the Afridis and the Baghāras are on an equal level; but the Afridis knew the value of their own rifles and the destructive nature of the artillery of their enemy, which the Baghāras evidently did not know. The Afridis refused to face the British artillery, but stuck to their guns and killed not a few of the British officers in the Indian army. They never expected to be successful against the Government of India in the long run, but being good shots and possessing good rifles, they caused enormous injury to life and property in the enemy's camp. Sir William Lockhart

is, if anything, superior to Sir Herbert Kitchener in military knowledge, but he had to fight with men who not only possessed good arms, but some of whom were also trained in military schools in India. The Bagháras gave little trouble to the Sirdar, but simply wasted their lives.

The lesson which the battle at Omdurman has taught the Muslim States is, that it is useless, for defensive purposes, to have merely a large but irregular, ill-provided, and ill-disciplined army; that it is essential for their existence as independent States to give up the antiquated ideas of warfare which prevailed at the time of the early Khalifas, and to study the art of war as understood and practised in modern States, and to keep pace with the latest improvements in the weapons of destruction. Probably the battle on the Nile will be the very last fought by any Muslim people with swords and spears as opposed to rifles and artillery. The Sultan's army is inferior to none in military equipments, and Abd el Hamid's hobby for the latest European military inventions is too well known to require any comments. The Ameer Abd er Rahman Khan is a lover of good guns. He has been silently preparing in Cabul, under European supervision, one of the best arsenals in Asia. Every week he receives something from Europe for the improvement of his forces. His army not only learns the use of the best weapons, but practises them to the best advantage, as its success in putting down rebellions in the interior of the country amply proves. The empire of the Shah has not had a big war for a long time, but prudence dictated to the late Shah, in his peaceful reign, to organize his army and to establish extensive arsenals in the country; while necessity compels the present occupant of the Persian throne not only to maintain the existing military estab-

lishments, but also to increase and supplement them almost every month. The only country that seems deficient in modern discipline is Morocco. But the comparative vicinity of that country, and its identity of race, language, and religion with the people of the Soudan, will soon rouse the Moorish monarch to his sense of responsibility. I should not be surprised to hear very soon that the gunmakers of Birmingham were extremely busy with orders from different parts of the Mohammedan world. I am afraid the Tsar's proposal for disarmament will nowhere be more coldly received than in Mohammedan countries. The Tsar appealing to Muslim monarchs for disarmament is like the wolf desiring the sheep to get rid of their horns.

The victory at Omdurman makes England the complete mistress of the Nile. It gives her also the government of the Eastern Soudan and a wide field for conquest into Central and Western Soudan. It means, at no distant date, the extension of the sphere of her influence over a great many Arab tribes and principalities which form a link between the boundaries of Egypt and the empire of Sokoto, which England has lately acquired by treaty. It means, therefore, that all the immense space of land which lies between the Nile and the Niger will not only be open to the commerce of the civilized world, but will also, in the near future, acknowledge the protectorate of the Union Jack. Further, it means also that a connection will soon be established between Khartoum and Zanzibar, through Uganda and British East Africa.

What I wish to emphasize here is the fact that by the victory on the Nile Great Britain once more comes into contact with several millions of the followers of the Prophet; and that from Khartoum to Sokoto, and from Omdurman to Zanzibar, the stability

of her government and the extent of her predominance will entirely depend upon her success in the administration of the additional millions that are about to be placed under her rule. I wish also to point out that the territories mentioned above are principally inhabited by people of Arab extraction, who are the most orthodox and the most warlike of all the Mussulman races of the world, and who, moreover, have been used to self-government up to the present time, and have been carefully instructed in the history of their empire and the traditions of its former glory. British statesmen will soon have to consider the form of government desirable for the tribes already conquered, and for those which may soon be placed under their protection. It is not for me to give here the details of a scheme of government which would be most agreeable to the Arab population; but I may warn the Government against some of the proposals which are already put forward by certain of the supporters of the present Cabinet. One of them is to establish a missionary college at Khartoum for the benefit or otherwise of the Arabs. Nothing would be more distasteful to the Arabs than an attempt to tamper with their religion. Such an attempt would at once set a spark to the religious fury of the Soudanese, and, for that matter, of all the African Mussulmans, and an explosion would occur, the effects of which would be most harmful to the stability of the British protectorate over Mussulman Africa. Russia and France would not be slow in taking advantage of the difficulties of England in the Dark Continent.

The effect of the fall of the Khalifa will, as is but natural, be most felt by the inhabitants of the country adjacent to the dominions of the Mahdi; but as all Arab tribes, speaking the same language, sharing the same

blood, traditions, and superstitions, have great connection and rapid communication between each other, it is reasonable that the victory of the Anglo-Egyptian army will be most discussed in the Arabian peninsula. As Great Britain is fast acquiring dominion over Arabs in Central and Eastern Africa, and as she already possesses Aden and a good deal of influence with Arab chiefs near Muscat, it is not unlikely, if circumstances permit, that she may try to establish a railway communication between Aden and the Persian Gulf, all along the sea coast of Arabia. By the annexation of Baluchistan, British India has been already made conterminous with the dominions of the Shah. Such a railway communication would bring it within a few days reach of British Africa. From the Somali Coast protectorate, which lies on the African side of the Gulf of Aden, a line of railway to British East Africa would connect British India with Uganda and the Soudan. From the Cape to Cairo and from Cairo to Karachi is a great ideal; perhaps its realization will come earlier than is generally imagined. Many things are necessary for realizing the ideal, and not the least important of them all is the friendship of the Turks and the goodwill of the Arabs and other Mussulman races in Asia and Africa.

The Pan-Islamic revival has suffered nothing by the fall of Khartoum; if anything, it has profited by it. As the Turkish Journals have already declared, it has been the desire of the enlightened statesmen of Turkey for the last twenty-five years to open the whole of the Soudan for purposes of commerce. The Egyptian Government, too, would have been compelled to regain its prestige over the Dervishes some time or another. It is doubtful, however, if the Khedive's Government, left to itself, would have

adopted the same steps which it did, under the advice of England, for the reconquest of the Soudan. It is possible that it might have come to some terms with the Khalifa, taking into consideration the logic of accomplished facts and the consequences of a fratricidal war. Be that as it may, the battle of Omdurman has furthered the Islamic revival in one important respect. I have already referred to the universal regret felt for the enormous loss of life at Omdurman. The Mahdi was not a recognized ruler, he was a rebel, and the Egyptian Government could not avoid a war with him. But suppose, in future, differences of opinion arise between recognized Muslim States. Can Islam afford to see a war between them? Certainly not.

To avoid such a war, there is a proposal to memorialize the Sultan of Turkey to issue an encyclical inviting all independent Muslim States to a conference at Mecca with a view to establishing a Muslim international arbitration committee, which would consist of the ablest jurists that the Islamic world possesses, and who would be altogether independent of the governments of Islamic countries. Such a proposal suggested itself to many Islamic minds when the Tsar's encyclical appeared; but it has gained ground since the battle at Omdurman, and is likely to receive a practical shape in reasonable time. The Christian governments cannot have any objection to that proposal, considering that the Emperor of Russia himself puts forward a similar proposal on a very high and even impracticable basis, and also because it does not affect them in the least. A war between two Muslim States has not taken place for some time; but it is not unlikely that foreign intrigues may so complicate affairs between two Muslim countries that a settlement by diplomacy may become impossible.

and an appeal to the arbitrament of the sword indispensable. In order to avoid such calamities, which are by no means imaginary, some steps must at once be adopted. No one can take the initiative in this matter more appropriately than the Protector of the Holy Places and the greatest ruler in Islam. No better place can be suggested for the conference than the city which gave birth to Mohammed and his religion. And surely no better time can be mentioned than the present, when peace conferences are in the air in the Christian world. Nothing is more palatable to the Sultan Abd el Hamid than attempts tending towards the reunion and revival of Islam. It is expected, therefore, that his Majesty will lose no time in ascertaining the views of Mussulman States regarding the proposal. The Khalifate has not had many opportunities for the exercise of its legitimate functions in the Mussulman world beyond the Turkish Empire. The victory of the Turkish army over the Greeks had the effect of drawing the detached portions of the Muslim world closer to the Khalifate, and proposals like the one suggested above, if wisely adopted, would prove to the Muslim world that the Khalifate is ready, in non-controversial matters, to do its best to promote harmony, peace and goodwill between the followers of the Prophet irrespective of their creed or country.

Another advantage which the battle on the Nile has unexpectedly brought to the promoters of the Pan-Islamic revival consists in the facilities for free and easy communication between the different parts of Mohammediān Africa. Hitherto the Eastern Soudan was practically inaccessible to many travellers themselves. It would have been impossible to send books and newspapers published in the most enlightened parts of Islam to the inhabitants of the Soudan; and, as the

chief instrument in the hands of those who desire the reunion of Islam is education, it would have been equally impossible to convert the Soudanese to the cause of modern enlightenment. Now, however, the millions of Central African Mussulmans are free to the influences of Mussulman scientific and political literature, which is sure to generate feelings of higher unity and more extensive brotherhood among them.

It may not inaptly be remarked here that it is the British rule, and *British rule alone*, which affords so many facilities of intercommunication to the Mussulman races. Whatever other blessings it may not have yet conferred upon its Mussulman subjects, it undoubtedly deserves most grateful thanks of the followers of the Prophet for the remarkable freedom of speech and writing which they enjoy under it. The greatest service to the reunion of Islam is really being done by the

Government of the Queen. I have already remarked that the chief instrument for uniting Muslims is education. What Muslim State is doing more for the higher education of Muslims than is being done by the Queen's Government in India? There is not a single Muslim country which boasts of a good Muslim university. Yet it is under the auspices of the British Government that the first Mussulman university upon a modern basis is about to be established in India. If Mussulman people are to be reunited, if Mussulman States are to be allied, if Mussulman civilization is to exercise its judicious influence among men, it will only be through the help and co-operation of Great Britain. On the other hand, if England is to remain a great Asiatic Power, and if she is to have a great African empire, the loyal attachment, and the cordial support of the Muslims are to her an absolute necessity.

The Nineteenth Century.

Rafuddin Ahmad.

## CONSTANCE.\*

By TH. BENTZON (*Mme. Blanc*).

Translated for The Living Age by Mrs. E. W. Latimer.

### CHAPTER XI.

M. de Glynne had been invited to dine with the doctor on Midsummer Day, the feast of Saint John the Baptist. From the Priory there was a fine view over the surrounding hills, which, when night came on the twenty-fourth of June, began to flame out one by one, as if the trees on the hill-tops were all on fire. These bonfires probably date back to the time of the

Druids, who thus celebrated the change from the winter solstice to that of summer.

However that may be, the peasants of Gascony do not go back into the past; they heap upon their threshing-floors dry grapevines, bundles of dry thorns, a few logs, and then fling on the brand which is to set the whole alight, as they begin a wild dance around the pile, in the midst of which the young men leap through the flames and the old men stand near by,

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motionless, with their backs turned to the fire, to repeat spells against the infirmities of age during the winter.

When nothing remains of the bonfire but its ashes they carefully gather up the last brands not quite extinguished, and every one who has secured one of these places it, as something precious, over his hearth. If any one in the house is taken sick, the brand is at once relighted. That is considered more efficacious than all the doctors in existence, with the sole exception of Dr. Vidal, who took no fees from his patients.

The church has sanctioned by a benediction these ancient customs, but the devil and the sorcerers lost nothing by that. All that is fantastic springs of itself from these flames; stories in this part of the country all begin either on Christmas Night or on Saint John's Night in midsummer.

"You will see a pretty sight, new perhaps to you, for they probably failed to give you notice of it last year," Dr. Vidal had said to his neighbor when he invited him unceremoniously to come and eat dinner with them.

This invitation had been given before the doctor had any idea that he should be forced to discontinue all attentions to the guest he had so often and so cordially invited to his table.

"It must be the last time," said he to himself, while Constance was opening, to add to their ordinary menu, jars of preserved fruits which were the triumph of Catinou, and even one that emitted the fine fragrance of truffles, for which Nérac is celebrated.

That morning she had taken a long ride on horseback, alone under the pines, that she might gather grapes in the best places, evidently because she knew M. de Glynne's gastronomic preferences. This would once have appeared to the doctor very natural on the part of a careful mistress

of the house; but now he became suspicious, disposed as he was,—he himself,—neither more nor less than his sister-in-law Edelmonie,—to look for harm in everything. So much had his mind been poisoned!

"What! have you got ortolans again? One would suppose we were expecting the king in person," he exclaimed, in a rough tone that his daughter hardly knew.

"A friend is worth quite as much as the king," replied Constance gayly.

"A friend! Is M. de Glynne, after all, so much our friend as that? If we should give the name of friend to all our neighbors—"

Constance, who was setting the table with Henriette, stopped short, and looked first at her cousin, who appeared troubled, and then at her father. The frown on his forehead, the compressed lips, the pale face, showed that M. Vidal was either suffering or out of temper. She dared not ask him what was the matter, but with the assistance of Henriette, who on her part seemed unusually reserved, went on spreading the fine, white tablecloth scented with lavender.

M. de Glynne came early, bringing strawberries and cherries from the Park, which were rather coldly received. He himself was in the best of humors, but the vague influences which, without words, warn sensitive people that a danger or misfortune is at hand, before long chilled his good spirits. For the first time, conversation lagged at table; there was an inexplicable constraint among the four friends.

Even Henriette spoke little; perhaps she suspected that her father had been talking to the doctor with an unsatisfactory result. She felt guilty herself for her imprudent remarks; her chatter and babble had, she knew, assisted to swell the idle talk to which others were now to be offered up in sacri-

fice. She was careful to say nothing to her cousin, and looked down into her plate every time that the eyes of Constance seemed to ask, "Can you tell me what has gone wrong?" As she ate her dinner she kept watch out of the window for the first fire on the hills, which would put an end to this wearisome repast where each one had an air of preparing for, of foreseeing, or of dreading, something that was to come.

"Ah!" she cried, suddenly, flinging aside her napkin, "there's a grand bonfire in the direction of La Brousse!"

And she ran outdoors, followed by Constance.

The two men hurriedly drank their coffee, and then went out into the road. It was now growing dark; the atmosphere was transparent, and the sky studded with stars, which defied the fires on the earth to rival their brilliancy. Other lights there were, very tiny, and flitting from place to place; innumerable fireflies, glittering in every tuft of grass; and these on earth and the stars above appeared to share with curiosity in the joyous dance of the leaping flames which, before the farmhouse of La Brousse, were surrounded by a dozen black shadows bounding frantically with shouts of laughter, the faint echo of which reached even to the Priory.

There was another smaller fire at a neighboring dwelling, with the same whirling group of demons, the same game of leapfrog over the burning pile, which sent out its flames furiously, as if to prevent the awkward ones from jumping over it, or at the least to scorch their breeches. Farther off, far in the distance, at the dairy farm of Branna, high up on the hillside, was an enormous bonfire that sent burning flakes of straw in all directions, like sparks from a rocket. The two young girls and the Parisian

broke into exclamations as each fresh fire was kindled, lighting up the horizon and casting a red glow over the whole landscape, its sudden flashes shining bright against the intense darkness of the pines which stood against the sky in serried masses, or illuminating the elms which stood singly along the roadside.

The party had reached a smooth, recently-mown place where there was a flock of sheep. Sheep are afraid of fire, and it is the custom of the country, on these occasions, to drive them to some cool spot where they can graze during the night till all is over. The shepherd who had this flock in charge stood looking at the bonfire, leaning upon his crook; the moon, which had risen like a great sickle of burning silver, lighted up at the same time his motionless figure and the white surge of sheep, only confusedly distinguishable as they pressed closely against each other.

"A picture by Millet!" said M. de Glynne.

As he spoke, a shooting star crossed the sky.

"Quick, quick,—we must wish something!" said Henriette.

"My wish is made," replied Constance.

"And mine too," said M. de Glynne, "if it is allowable to wish the impossible."

"Oh, as for me," cried Henriette, "I have nothing more to demand."

They were silent; the beauty around them took the place of words, except now and then a low remark about the fairy-like enchantment of this midsummer festival. To speak of other things would have broken the spell. Each one felt that the doctor was committing a sort of profanation when he introduced something discordant.

"You are very foolish," he said brusquely to his daughter, "to come

out here at this time of night with nothing on your head. You will take cold."

"Take cold—in this weather?"

"Most certainly. I noticed that you were hoarse this morning. We must go back. Come, go on quickly ahead of us. It is the doctor who orders you—you are so imprudent."

For an hour he had been planning this *coup d'état*. Constance was ready to take heaven and earth to witness that she had not the slightest cold, but her cousin pressed her arm.

"You see it is only a pretext. He wants to send us away."

"But why?" asked Constance, with a singular anguish of heart.

"Ah why?"—Henriette hurried her on at a run. "Because everything cannot be said before young girls. They turned me out the day Horace came to ask my hand, as if I did not know all about it!"

Constance stopped suddenly, as if turned to stone.

"Indeed," said Henriette, "I don't see what should prevent M. de Glynne from marrying you."

"Marry me?—me?"

In all her love-dream, Constance had never thought of a possible marriage. To see Raoul from time to time (she called him Raoul to herself) to think of him constantly, to fancy that by her silent devotion she was doing him some good,—that had been all for which she ever hoped. At first this unexpected suggestion of her cousin's almost frightened her, but by degrees it made a deeper impression upon her heart, filling it with joy as well as fear.

Now she wondered if her father's constrained looks all day had been caused by his dread of being parted from her. He had had that fear already, when the first proposal of marriage had been made for her, the one so quickly rejected. Was it thus that

her destiny, her very life, was to be decided by this conversation which she was not to overhear? As she thought about it, it seemed as if Henriette might not be wrong. "If it might be that, really—" she repeated to herself timidly, bewildered, ready to faint. Oh, never before had this night of the festival of Saint John brought with it such a marvel—never had its fires illuminated such strange possibilities! "But why did he say, in that case, that the realization of his wish was impossible?"

Meantime the bonfires went out one by one, leaving the dark hillsides to their habitual aspect of deep peace under the diamond glitter of the stars, whose serene and everlasting light survived the brief illumination of the midsummer festival. There was no more laughing, no more dancing, nothing but the music of the frogs, which in that part of the country makes vocal the silence of the night, as the music of the crickets does that of the sunshine all through the months of summer. Dr. Vidal, however, lent no ear to these harmonies of nature; the delicious prelude of a master singer, the last nightingale of the season, perhaps, belated in the woods around La Brousse, was almost unnoticed by him, so absorbed was he by what he had to say.

With some incoherence he began:

"I want you to know, first of all, my dear neighbor, how much it costs me—such absurd scruples would never have suggested themselves to me, but the father of a family ought to take some notice of the opinion of others, however foolish it may be—"

Almost between every word he gave a short cough, as if to clear his voice; his stick struck wrathfully the bushes by the wayside or the pebbles in the path; he was evidently in a state of great excitement. M. de Glynne came to his aid, interrupting him:

"What you wish to tell me, my dear doctor, allow me to guess. A little later, very soon, perhaps, I should have spoken of it to you. I have been wrong, very wrong, not to have been more open with you a long time since, when a circumstance happened which seemed to require explanation. I have been a coward. You do not know what a charm it had for a wanderer who had ceased to have a hearth and home to find himself in a family circle like yours, to receive there impressions sweeter and deeper than he had ever known before. I have stolen a payment of belated blessing, unexpected and delicious, which I had no right to have enjoyed."

"Blessing!—you are exaggerating! But if you have found pleasure in being with us, rest assured that you have brought much to us. You have robbed us of nothing, my dear friend. We offered you with pleasure all you seem to have so greatly prized. Ah, if it only depended on me—"

"I know how good you are, and it makes me feel myself the more guilty. Want of foresight may become a very great fault, may lead to disastrous consequences; I am experiencing this again, at an age which leaves me no excuse."

"No, you have nothing to reproach yourself with, nor, for that matter, have I. This world is very stupid—"

"Forgive me, it may be right. No man, apparently, can say he is inaccessible to certain emotions, however old he may be and however sincerely and absolutely he may have thought himself done with them. Feelings which I believed were forever dead in me have been reawakened in the presence of a being so pure, so charming, that I had not believed such a one could exist in this world—"

The doctor gave a start. It was true then! He fixed his eyes on the face of M. de Glynne, though it was too

dark to see him distinctly. He could read nothing in the uncertain moonlight. He only knew that his voice trembled and choked, and he felt that the agitation of the man beside him was as great as his own.

"I assure you," said M. de Glynne with vehemence, "that I could never conceive such happiness as beginning to live again, thanks to her, and beside her, if I were free. But I am not, and for that reason I ought to have put away from me such vain ideas—I ought to have intrenched myself in my solitude. One word would have sufficed to make you understand what many men would look upon but lightly—but a word not spoken at the right time becomes very difficult to speak afterwards. I feel that so this evening—and yet it is necessary. Do you remember the circumstance that brought you to the Park, upon a certain evening a little more than a year ago?"

"The stab with the knife," replied the doctor, troubled in spite of himself.

"Well, allow me to ask what interpretation you put upon the presence there of a woman who tried to kill herself in my house?"

"*Parbleu!* I supposed it to be a case of a forsaken mistress, a sort of revenge."

"I have never forsaken any woman," answered M. de Glynne slowly, "and the only one of us two who had any right to take vengeance on the other was assuredly myself. That woman was my wife."

"Your wife!" stammered the doctor. "Then you are—"

"I am married," finished M. de Glynne, with a singular accent of irony and bitterness, as if he were mocking at himself. "And if in speaking to you sometimes of the past I have failed to mention this episode of my existence, it was because it was

not fit for the ears of one who was almost always present. There is nothing at all edifying in the story of my marriage. Would you like me to tell it to you briefly now?"

The doctor gave an affirmative growl.

"Well, the year of the war was a terrible year to me in more ways than one. I have already told you that I passed the time that I was a prisoner in a little town in North Germany. In the midst of my weariness, my indignation against what had befallen my country and myself, in short, everything that was revolting in that lamentable time, I had the misfortune to meet with what might seem calculated to reconcile a man to his fate; I met a woman for whom I felt a kind of passion. Women could do what they pleased with me at that day. If I have hated them since it is because I once cared too much for them. Remember that neither as a boy nor as a young man did I have any one to cherish—no family—nothing. I was an easy prey to them. I did not love one—I loved all women. There were plenty of German women of a certain class ready enough to offer consolation to the French prisoners, but such ignoble intrigues alternating with the pleasures of the *gasthaus*, where they drank oceans of beer, were not to my taste. I had nothing to do with them. Fate reserved something worse for me.

"A glance of the blue eyes that you have seen fell on me. They had not then acquired the boldness you may have observed in them; they looked good and simple. We had reached the town that morning and were marched in our dilapidated uniforms between two ranks of curious spectators, whom we would gladly have beaten or knocked down, and among them were women. As we halted I heard a musical voice say in French, 'Poor fel-

lows!' with an expression of real sympathy. I turned in the direction of the voice and saw the same sympathy expressed in a face which seemed to me something more than pretty. You can imagine perhaps what she may have been at twenty. She turned and spoke to a sort of governess who was beside her and said again, 'Poor fellows!' loud enough to be heard. Then in German, which I understood, and with a sort of generous enthusiasm which went right to my heart, 'I adore the French! You may be sure they will have their revenge.'

"She was not a Prussian, but of Austrian birth, with the suppleness and the infinite fascination of her countrywomen, together with their elegant manners. Like me, she was weary of the town in which she was almost a foreigner, but circumstances had brought her there to live in the family of her Prussian fiancé, who was engaged in the war with France. Hatred of this man and a desire for vengeance had much to do with my future relations with Mlle. de Leibenberg. To carry off from such a man the woman whom he loved, and who was his promised wife—this lent great zest to the relations that were soon established between us. It chanced that the house in which I lodged was next door to the old mansion occupied by the Von Braubachs, her future parents-in-law. We met constantly. I watched for the times of her going out. I knew all the daily habits of Frida. I arranged to meet her at concerts, at the theatre and on the ice. She skated with unusual grace, and the excitements of an exercise which permits certain *rapprochements*, certain familiarities which mean nothing, were propitious for us. Yes, it was on the ice after a false step, which she told me afterwards she had made on purpose, that I seized her hand for the first time. She pre-

tended that the accident was severe enough to oblige me to offer her my arm, and I was presented to old Mme. von Braubach in the tent where punch was served and people were eating sandwiches at the buffet or drinking wine, as they warmed themselves at great coal fires.

"All of us officers who were willing to associate with our captors were received into the best society of the place. Generally few of us cared to accept civilities. The news from France, shouted daily in the streets, kept up the wrathful feelings of the officers, as you can well understand, and at every opportunity this wrath displayed itself, even when the people were disposed to be polite or even hospitable. But I was very ready to accept invitations given me by the Von Braubachs. Frida had already bewitched me by her beautiful, light hair, rather darker than it is now, and really magnificent. A gust of wind, as she rapidly skimmed over the ice, tossed her hair about her face, and her whole look bewitched my senses. Long afterwards I seemed to hear her little cry for help and to feel her light weight on my shoulder when I had thrown my arm around her to support her. That I might not see her laughing at the trick she played me, she raised her muff to her face, and I could only see her eyes, bright with triumph and emotion, above the fur.

"Things could not remain in that state. I went assiduously to the Von Braubach mansion. Its owners were inexpressibly heavy, wearisome creatures. I went solely to see one who since her betrothal made part of the family, and in whose fidelity to the absent bridegroom the bedizened elephant whom she called *Mutterchen* seemed to place full confidence. Frida knew how to take advantage of this confidence; she could cajole and hoodwink any one she pleased. *Mutterchen*

explained to me that all the Viennese women were like her, a little playful—like kittens—with a dash of sauciness, *keckheit*, as she called it, but that Frida was an absolute angel, a gay and joyous angel who must have freedom to use her wings. 'Being an orphan, she was now and always would be entirely theirs. Rudolph had so planned it. She loved Rudolph to distraction. How could one help loving such a handsome fellow?' And the proud mother showed me a photograph of Rudolph in his hussar's uniform, the uniform of the 'hussars of death.'

"It gave me a feeling of horror. There was something ghastly about it; his sinister black uniform, of such a sombre richness, looked to me like the livery of the spirit of war, that hideous phantom which had swept away from France a whole generation of men. 'As I cannot kill him,' I said, as a sort of excuse to myself for having become intimate with his family 'I will do worse yet, for he would doubtless prefer death to the pain of seeing me capture the heart of his fiance.' There was something exciting in the thought of thus bearding a splendid fellow like a Norse god, and clad like a knight in one of Burger's ballads, who looked proudly down on us from his picture frame, which was daily adorned with fresh flowers by his mother and sisters.

"Frida assured me that she never participated in this sentimental decoration of the portrait. How could people so narrow and so full of the was spirit as the Von Braubachs suspect that a man less handsome than their son, a Frenchman smarting under the humiliation of defeat, could be preferred to this triumphal warrior, crowned with laurels? Yet she loved me, possibly out of pure contradiction; for she was fantastic in everything,—possibly from an impulse of generosity—how do I know?—but

she loved me—after her fashion! It was a terribly intoxicating, bewildering fashion, and stirred my blood in spite of my better reason. Yes, truly, she had a fancy for me as ardent as the fancies she felt afterwards for other men, which made me want to crush her."

M. de Glynne stopped, almost choked by emotion. They walked on a few yards in silence.

"She sacrificed everything to me and asked nothing in return, no, not even an engagement. Her grief when I left her was silent,—all the more touching. When I got back to France I was oblivious of Frida for some time. Love of country took possession of me. I could not give a thought to anything else. But by degrees it seemed as if some powerful threads still linked my heart to the sorceress who still from a distance could play upon me at her will. I asked myself what had become of her. I fell into transports of jealousy as I pictured her married to Rudolph, or into fits of sharp remorse if I fancied that for my sake she had renounced fortune and position. I knew that I had compromised her.

"The gravity of this offence grew greater in my eyes after I returned to France, where young girls are better guarded and where our duty toward them is more defined. I tried to distract my thoughts from her, to forget her in the society of other women, not to be compared to her; in short I discovered that she was more to me than a woman who had afforded me some solace in my captivity. I was more and more haunted by her image, when suddenly she appeared in Paris with an elderly cousin of a most complaisant disposition, who subsequently chaperoned her in many of her adventures. She wrote me to come at once to see her; she burst out laughing when she saw me; then she melted

into tears and told me that she had not been able to make up her mind to marry Von Braubach; she had told him everything, and had added (what was the truth) that she had conceived a hatred for every German and that she adored Frenchmen.

"This pretty refrain, which even under other circumstances would have sounded charming, was thenceforth so continually chanted in my ears that in spite of good advice and of my better reason, I married Frida. I married her with the rash enthusiasm of one who, long parched with thirst, throws himself beside a spring of clear, pure, limpid water. The truth was, I had tried to live without her and had failed. Frida had inspired me with that kind of love which is a species of disease rather than a sentiment, which possession increases but does not satisfy, which jealousy torments incessantly, and which is independent of all confidence, of all esteem."

"But such love does not last," said Dr. Vidal, nodding his head like one who had diagnosed a very common malady.

"It lasted as long as she chose it should last. I was like soft wax in her skilful hands. It lasted until another man had supplanted me, as I had supplanted Von Braubach. She was wildly desirous of luxury and society, and she made me send in my resignation that we might live in Paris and pass the summer in great state at Pommereul. I gave in like a fool to all her extravagance; I was amused by her childish eagerness for pleasure. I saw that she liked to flirt, but I felt sure that her flirtations were wholly innocent.

At last, however, it became necessary for me to reproach her for her reckless expenditure, which went beyond all bounds. I do not know how she had been brought up. Of all she

told me I do not believe one word,—falsehood was so natural to her. But most certainly no one had ever given her the smallest notion of management or of economy, and yet her family, though a very good one, of very old nobility, was not rich, and she could not have been encouraged from her cradle to fling away money with both hands. A day came when I saw clearly all at once, when she forced me to kill a poor devil, an old friend, who had probably wronged me no more than many others had, but who was the first to arouse my serious suspicions.

The doctor made a sudden exclamation of surprise and disgust.

"Yes," went on M. de Glynne, "I killed him in a duel, and the memory of it haunts me sometimes. As for her who was the most guilty, she succeeded in making me believe that she had been only imprudent, a little off her guard. I forgave her; would you believe it?—I resumed my chain. But it was not for long. The year following I saw with my own eyes, beyond any possibility of doubt, what could not fail to emancipate me—to cure me by disgust.—Yes, it was a cure as sudden, as complete, as if hot irons had been used to burn all doubt away. I surprised her with the Marquis de Voroux—"

"What, your guardian?"

"With that old man of whom I told you, who had brought me up, as he said. No one had more earnestly opposed my marriage than he. He told me I had been caught in the snares of an adventuress. At first he had cherished a violent antipathy for my wife. And she used to laugh cruelly at his wrinkled old face, at his white hair and his pretensions as a man of gallantry. But at last they appeared reconciled, and as the Marquis was a widower, he came often to our house to get relief, so he said, from his sor-

row and his loneliness. He found consolation, I can tell you."

"But," interrupted Dr. Vidal, "you have not explained to me by what monstrous perversity of taste this young woman accepted the attentions of so old and ugly a man."

"Did I not tell you that she had debts to pay? Very probably it was some dressmaker's bill that was the last cause of the good fortune of the Marquis de Voroux. I told her calmly, but with a contempt that she felt—being intelligent—that she should never come back to me. And as I could not fight a man of sixty-five who was popularly considered to have stood to me in the place of a father, I demanded a legal separation, which was obtained without publicity, for Mme. de Glynne consented to the step in dread of rousing more scandal. No one knew exactly what had taken place. She was—she is still—considered a woman not above reproach, though scandal has never been able to fasten any positive misdeed upon her.

"That is all. She destroyed my life. She ruined me in every way. She made me give up my military career. I was no longer of any account in the world. I was like a fragment of wreckage, which for years floats here and there upon the sea. Travelling did me some good. It is the best remedy in such cases; new scenes at every turn, wholesome fatigue, and a constant struggle against material danger, all have a good influence. One may recover something of himself in the enjoyment of scenery, and may forget for a time the human race, which has made him suffer, and which is after all so small a thing on the face of the universe. I told myself at last that I had health, leisure, means and independence—things not given to every man—why should I not use them? Why should I weaken myself by self-pity?

"This change of thought came over me when a taste for work returned. I began to write without any idea of meeting with approval; I took up the only life that seemed thenceforward open to me—the intellectual. I shut myself up in an historic past, where I could choose such heroes for my friends as pleased me. From that time I was saved. But one cannot do much work while wandering about the world. I went from city to city to explore great libraries. I stayed in London a long time to investigate subjects in the British Museum. I studied our national archives; and at last, having marked out my course and collected my materials, I felt the need of solitude; I was used to living alone. I sought out a retired corner of the earth where I might make use of my treasures, some place where no one would disturb me. I cast anchor, as you know, at the Park. I was tired of wandering about; I resolved to attach myself to some one place.

"Unfortunately the person whom I least desired to see succeeded in discovering me. She came by chance upon my track, which she had for a long time lost because of my wanderings. She came to tell me the old story of repentance, 'I have expiated, I have suffered'—the same old song, that left me cold, as you saw, and which she ended by an attempt at suicide as false as all the rest. Since that farce I have heard no more of her, but I am very sure she is in excellent health. Such creatures live forever, to the shame and the chagrin of others."

In his heart the doctor saw no great reason why Mme. de Glynne should not continue to live. Her husband's past life seemed to him to show less good sense and clear judgment than he had wished for the future son-in-law of his dreams. He could now reply calmly to any one who might put the

question, "And when is the wedding?" by "What nonsense, my friends! M. de Glynne is a married man." And no one need suspect that he had not known it from the beginning.

Constance was the first person to be told of this surprising piece of news, so that she might run no further risk of losing her head, if she happened to have any fancy for M. de Glynne. A married man! That single word was enough to arrest any girl on the brink of an attachment! Yes, certainly, he must enlighten Constance at once.

"My dear neighbor," he said to M. de Glynne, "the confidence you have just shown me touches me exceedingly, and it makes no alteration in the regard I have always felt for you. I am sorry for you, but you must look forward to a happier future, and take refuge in study, and then all will be well—or at least all will be better. My prescription is, work, and continue to cultivate indignation and contempt, which are great antidotes to any weakness of the heart—"

"And never set foot again in the Priory, is what you would add, is it not?" finished M. de Glynne with a bitter smile.

"I do not say that, but you might see the expediency of coming less often at present, and so stopping the village talk. Of course my daughter has never heard any chatter about your visits. How could she imagine that an idea which never entered her own head could have filled the heads of others?"

M. de Glynne fixed his sad look on the doctor's face.

"You need not tell me that such an idea could never have occurred to her—I know myself too well."

"Do not misinterpret my words, if you please. Constance is reserved, serious, somewhat cold. It would be impossible for her to take a sudden fancy to any one, however much he

might deserve her regard. Besides, she quite understands that a simple country girl is not a match for a man such as you are."

"Oh, come now, you are mocking me," broke in M. de Glynne with eagerness.

"Not at all—We are not of your world. I am not saying this in a spirit of humility. In my eyes, one honest man is the equal of another."

"In mine too. And a woman like Mlle. Vidal is superior to us all."

"I own that I am inclined to believe so. But when a treasure has been given to a man, it is his duty to watch over it; I must watch now over my daughter. She feels for you to-day only a frank friendship; now you have just confided to me your liking for her. If she should perceive it—who knows?—her peace might be disturbed. It is a father's duty not to let a change of that sort take place. Such things occur sometimes when people meet too frequently and naturally."

They had now reached once more the gate of the Priory.

"Adieu then!" said M. de Glynne.

"*Au revoir!* I shall come to the Park more often than ever. Really?—You won't come in for a moment?"

"Thank you, I think it is getting late. You will make my excuses to the young ladies."

Constance and Henriette, who were in the parlor, heard the gate open.

"There he comes," said Henriette. Then, almost at once, she said as she listened,

"Wait—my uncle is alone. How does that happen? He must have something to say to you—important affairs, very likely. I should be one too many—I am going—good luck, cousin!"

The doctor seemed surprised to find his daughter alone.

"Henriette is not here?"

"No, she has just gone up to her room."

"Well, all the better. I have a strange piece of news to tell you. We have just been having a long talk, M. de Glynne and I, as we walked along. He gave me some facts about his own life which he had never before told to any one, and they throw light on a good many questions I have put to myself. Would you believe that this extraordinary man has a wife somewhere? Well, yes, married—a married man—"

These words produced on Constance an effect wholly unforeseen by her father. She sprang up with a stifled cry, resting her hand on the table as if to support herself, put her other hand upon her heart to steady its beating, turned white to the lips and then, closing her eyes, she fainted away.

(To be continued.)

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#### PRIVATE HOOK, V.C.

It was half-past three o'clock in the afternoon; the sun from out a cloudless sky poured down his scorching rays, and Rorke's Drift lay baking in the heat of the African summer. Shade there was none, nor was there any breeze to sway the poplars; the

grass was shrivelled and brown, the tented camp dazzling in its whiteness; and the bare rocky ledges of Oscarsburg, seeming so near in that transparent atmosphere that one might almost distinguish the flies crawling on them, quivered in the palpitating air.

Private Henry Hook (second battalion of H. M. 24th Foot) with his shirt-sleeves rolled above his elbows, was out in the open making tea for the sick in hospital. Suddenly he heard the sound of hoofs, and, looking up, saw two horsemen approaching at a furious gallop, like those who ride for their lives. The jaded horses were covered with sweat and foam, and their riders, one of whom was almost in rags, reeled like drunken men in the saddle. The horror of a great catastrophe was written on faces grimy with dust and powder, for they were two out of the handful of survivors from the fatal field of Isandlana, where an hour before the first battalion of the 24th had been practically annihilated by the Zulus.

"Stand to your arms, and defend yourselves as best you may; the enemy is at our heels, and will be here directly!"

Such was the dreadful message which one of them delivered, while the other galloped on in order to warn the defenders of Helpmakaar some twelve miles off.

There were but eighty fighting men at Rorke's Drift, and thirty-six invalids in the hospital with a few attendants; of friendly natives there were two hundred, who would probably show their friendliness by running away on the first chance. The commander, Major Spalding, had ridden over to Helpmakaar early in the afternoon; the two chief officers remaining were Lieutenant Gonville Bromhead of the 24th, and Lieutenant Chard, R. E.; an urgent message was at once despatched to the latter, who was down by the river seeing to his ponts, as upon him devolved the defence, and, pending his arrival, the camp was struck, and the two wagons loaded with the sick men, ready to be driven off for greater safety to Helpmakaar.

Rorke's Drift is in Natal, but close

to Zululand, from which it is separated by the Buffalo River. It takes its name from one Rorke, a border-agent, who built a house for himself, and farmed the land. Afterwards the place was purchased by the Reverend Otto Witt, a clergyman of the Swedish Church, who established here a Zulu mission. The big hill at the back was named Oscarsburg, out of compliment to his Scandinavian Majesty. The farm itself, with its enclosed garden in front, stood upon a terrace some two or three acres in extent. The ground was planted with standard grape-vines, orange, apricot, and other fruit-trees, Cape poplars, large gum-trees, and luxuriant shrubs and bushes, so that one could not see far for vegetation. The dwelling-house, which had been converted into a hospital, was about eighty feet long by sixty broad, and consisted of a ground-floor only. The end walls were built of stone, the side walls of kiln-dried bricks, and the partition walls of bricks dried in the sun. Some of the rooms were entered from the outside; others only communicated with each other; six of them were occupied by patients. Close to the house stood the church, a smaller building, which had been converted into a store, wagon-house and stable, and, like the house, was thickly thatched with grass. Beyond them was a kraal, or inclosure for cattle. The whole place was quite unfortified, and open to attack; none knew this better than the handful of men now so suddenly menaced.

On second thoughts it was judged too hazardous to attempt to move the sick to Helpmakaar, as they would be almost certain to fall into the hands of the Zulus. The wagons therefore were unloaded, and helped to eke out the line of defence, which consisted of bags of mealies (or maize) placed in such a way as to connect the hospital, store, and kraal by a complete ram-

part. The friendly Kaffirs were compelled at the point of the bayonet to bring the bags of mealies from the store and place them in position. The walls were loopholed, doors and windows blocked, ammunition served out, and the water-cart was filled and brought within the enclosure.

A hundred native troopers of Durnford's Horse now rode up, and an officer asked for instructions, Colonel Durnford having been killed. The men were ordered to watch the enemy, hold them in check as long as possible, and, when that became impracticable, to retire on the post and help in the defence.

In about an hour, and before much could be done by way of fortifying the camp, the sound of distant firing announced the approach of the Zulus. With the first boom of the guns the two hundred friendly natives ran off, to a man, and the troopers of Durnford's Horse, demoralized by the loss of their leader and exhausted with a hard day's fighting, galloped off towards Helpmakaar, to the consternation of the little garrison. The defenders being thus diminished in numbers the line of defence was too long for them to hold; a row of biscuit-boxes was therefore hastily thrown across to provide a second rampart, behind which they might retire if necessary.

The Zulus advanced at first in three companies, about fifteen hundred men in each, under the command of Cetewayo's brother, crossed the Buffalo River about four miles below Rorke's Drift, climbed some rising ground, and, squatting on the grass, took snuff and considered the situation. They were not long in deciding on their plan of attack, and were soon seen pouring round the Oscarsburg in a dense mass. As they advanced, in good order, the column of men opened and threw out horns with the object of surrounding the place. The main

body, with yells of savage exultation, charged the hospital at a run, thinking to make short work of the English. Most of those who had guns climbed the heights of the Oscarsburg, whence, secure among the clefts of the rocks, they poured in such a continuous rain of bullets as would have speedily put an end to the unequal contest had their marksmen been skilful.

At the end of the hospital furthest from the store four men were stationed. Privates John Williams and Joseph Williams defended one of the wards, in which were four patients, and Privates Hook and Cole defended a small room which formed the back corner of the building next to a ward containing six patients. On the approach of the enemy Cole made his escape by the front of the house, and joined the main body of his comrades behind the barricade, where he was one of the first to fall mortally wounded by a Zulu bullet.

Hook, who was now left by himself, had a Martini-Henry rifle with bayonet attached, and previous to the assault had distributed about his clothing more than a hundred cartridges. He, and the two Williams, kept up a steady fire on the advancing Zulus through the loopholes in the walls.

But the work was too rapid for safety, and during an interval in the combat, Hook discovered to his consternation that the heat of his gun had jammed a cartridge. The piece was now useless! Seizing his cleaning-rod he rammed it down the barrel with the energy of despair, and succeeded in forcing out the spent cartridge just in the nick of time; however, the rush of Zulus was too strong for one man to cope with, and he had to retreat into the next room,—the ward containing six patients.

Meanwhile the two Williams had been hard pressed. Fourteen Zulus had fallen under their fire; but in one

of the furious assaults the door of the room they were in (an outer door which had been blocked) was burst open, and Joseph Williams with two patients was dragged out and cut to pieces. While this was going on, John Williams made a hole with his pick through the inner wall of the room, and now, with the other two patients, crawled into the ward where Henry Hook was. This room therefore contained eight sick men and the two privates. Meanwhile the Zulus, who had advanced against the front of the hospital under cover of the garden, were not idle, and, though repulsed with great loss, kept up a persistent attack. At last, by sheer force of numbers, they drove the English to take refuge behind their second rampart, and, swarming over the first line of defence, broke into the hospital through the front doors. Some set fire to the thatched roof, which soon began to blaze; others rushed towards the ward in which the ten men were entrapped.

"Quick!" said Hook to Williams. "Make a hole with your pick into the next room, while I defend the doorway; it's our only chance!" A slender chance indeed, as Hook knew full well! As he spoke the Zulus were upon him. They advanced with fiendish yells to complete the work of massacre, hurling their assegais, one of which wounded Hook in the forehead.

And now commenced a struggle for life against time, fire, and overwhelming odds. Fortunately Hook kept quite cool, and at each shot a savage fell. Sometimes the foe came on so quickly that the man had no time to fire, and then the bayonet did good service. Seven men lay dead before the fatal doorway, but still the Zulus fearlessly pressed forward over the bodies of their comrades. Seizing the muzzle of the gun, even as its contents were about to be discharged into their naked breasts, they tried to wrest the

weapon from Hook's grasp; the barrel grew so heated with constant use that it took the flesh off his blistered hand. Overhead, the blazing roof crackled fiercely, as the flames gathered force, and the smoke mingled with the smoke of the gun. The ammunition was fast disappearing, and still Williams worked hard with the pick. The sick men were powerless to help. Was it possible for Hook to hold out?

At last the hole was made, and Williams managed to drag seven of the invalids through; the eighth, who had a broken leg which had not long been set, still remained. Hook seized him by the collar, and made a rush for the opening. As he did so a Zulu bullet lodged in the man's coat, and it was only at the cost of breaking his leg a second time that Hook managed to drag him through.

The room in which they now found themselves had only an outside door, and this had been securely blocked; could they have got through it they would only have fallen into the hands of the Zulus. The one thing to be done was to pass from room to room of the burning house, and join the main body of the defenders. While Hook, therefore, undertook the now easier task of defending the hole instead of the door, Williams wielded the pick, and made a hole through the wall on the further side of the room, by which they all crawled into the next ward. This too had only an outer door, which had been blocked, and another hole had accordingly to be made before they could pass into the farthest room.

On the opposite side of this room a small window was just discernible through the wreathing clouds of smoke, and by it they must escape, for they could not break through the wall, which was an end one, and built, as has been said, of stone. There were two doors to this apartment, and out-

side the one that led through the inner wall the Zulus could be seen brandishing their assegais as they came on to the attack. The sight of them, their horrid yells, the crackling of the blazing roof which threatened every instant to fall, the noise of the guns, the apparent hopelessness of their position, drove one of the patients, who was somewhat light-headed with fever, mad; making a rush for the door, he was, after a fierce struggle, seized and hacked to pieces outside. His death gave the others time to clamber through the window and drop to the ground; and the nine men were now so far safe that they were clear of the burning hospital just as the ammunition was exhausted.

They had, however, only exchanged one form of danger for another. Unknown to them, the English had been driven behind the second line of defence, the single row of biscuit-boxes more than a hundred feet from the hospital. The intervening space was thick with the smoke of the guns; it was swept by Zulu bullets from the heights of the Oscarsburg; corpses covered the ground; assegais were flying in all directions; yet only by crossing this field of death could precarious shelter be reached.

Hook managed to hoist the broken-legged man on to his back. He was tall, and, powerless to help himself, hung like a sack, his feet dragging along the ground. The slow progress was frightful. An assegai, hurled through the air, struck the man, but fortunately stuck harmlessly in his over-coat. Great beads of sweat gathered on Hook's brow; his veins stood out like cords; his breath came in broken gasps; his legs tottered beneath him. One more supreme effort and he neared the barricade; he was seen, recognized, and helped inside, both rescuer and rescued unharmed by spear or bullet.

Faint and exhausted as Hook was, he had to turn to immediately, and fight shoulder to shoulder with his sorely pressed comrades for dear life.

Suddenly, there being no twilight in this region, night fell, and the enemy would have made short work of them had not the flames from the burning hospital, the roof of which had by this time fallen in, lighted up the darkness and rendered each Zulu warrior as he broke cover an easy target for the guns. The dead lay so thick as to form a kind of rampart round the beleaguered place; yet again and again with the utmost courage the enemy came on, climbing over the bodies of their comrades, swarming over the defences, and seizing the rifles pointed at them. Six times they got inside the first line of defence, and six times were driven back by the bayonet, the little garrison sallying out and harassing their retreat. Before each attack the enemy always performed a war-dance, and then, having worked themselves into a frenzy, rushed fearlessly with devilish yells at the barricades. An attempt was made by them to fire the store-house, and one fellow was shot as he was in the act of applying a lighted torch to the roof.

Thus the fight raged without ceasing for eleven hours. Marvellous to say, the defenders had lost only seventeen men, while between three and four hundred Zulus had fallen. Suddenly, about three o'clock, the attack ceased, and the enemy retired in apparent discouragement. This short respite was made the most of by strengthening the defences. Two or three men climbed on to the roof of the storehouse, and began to strip it off to prevent its being fired; but they had not made much progress, when they happened to catch sight of the Zulus stealthily returning to the attack. They at once gave the alarm, and the wearied sol-

diers, standing to their arms, prepared to renew the desperate struggle.

To remain on the roof was but to furnish a target for the enemy's guns; the men therefore descended one by one, and the last to leave, before he followed his comrades, cast a comprehensive glance around. In that clear atmosphere, as has been said, one can see a long distance, and the sight that met his eyes made his heart beat fast, and his cheek flush with excitement. "Hurrah!" he shouted joyfully, "hurrah! The army of Lord Chelmsford is in sight!" And sure enough, over the low hills eastward, though still some miles distant, the English soldiers could be plainly seen advancing. The little garrison cheered lustily and turned again to the struggle with new hope. But it was soon seen that the Zulus also had got hold of the intelligence, and, after some hesitation, they finally withdrew. Rorke's Drift was safe.

Messengers from Isandlana the day before had brought word to the Commander-in-Chief that an attack in force had been made on the camp, and he had returned in hot haste to find that the force left there had been practically annihilated. From thence he marched to Rorke's Drift full of the gloomiest forebodings with regard to its fate—forebodings confirmed apparently by the column of smoke rising from the burning hospital. If Rorke's Drift had fallen, so probably had Helpmakaar, leaving Natal, and indeed South Africa, at the mercy of the Zulus. His army was exhausted by four and twenty hours' forced march; it was destitute of provisions, and almost entirely of ammunition. Lord Chelmsford was therefore distracted with anxiety, knowing that he stood in the greatest jeopardy.

And now through their field-glasses the officers saw some one on the roof of the store waving the English flag.

Was it only a ruse of the enemy? Colonel (now Sir Baker) Russell, and a troop of mounted infantry dashed forward in advance, and crossed the Buffalo River warily, straining their eyes and ears for some sign which might allay their apprehensions. Then, as they came within hail, a ringing British cheer resolved all doubts. Soon the rest of the troops came up, and as the General rode around the smoking ruins and battered defences, saw the heaps of dead Zulus, and heard the thrilling story of the siege, he heartily thanked the brave handful of defenders, and enthusiastically acknowledged that it was the most gallant action he had ever heard of.

Later on the same morning Private Hook was again busily engaged, this time in making coffee for his thirsty comrades. He was in his shirt and trousers, his braces hanging down behind; and, as he had had no opportunity to wash, his face and hands were still black with smoke and powder. Suddenly he received a peremptory order to appear before the General, and as there was no time to make himself respectable, he obeyed with a quaking heart, and was ushered into the presence of the Commander-in-Chief and the assembled officers.

Lord Chelmsford began to question him with regard to the defence of the hospital, but he was so overcome with confusion that it was with difficulty he could stammer forth a few words in reply. However, the whole story had been already told by the grateful broken-legged man and the other patients. The Commander-in-Chief shook hands with him, and highly complimented him upon his bravery; and this so added to his confusion that he hardly knew whether he stood on his head or heels. Nor did the matter end here; he was recommended for the Victoria Cross, together with his com-

rade Private John Williams.<sup>1</sup> And so it came to pass that six months later, on August 3rd, 1879, before the assembled officers and in the presence of his fellow-soldiers, Hook was thanked for his share in the gallant defence of the hospital; and on the very scene of

Macmillan's Magazine.

the exploit—a rare occurrence—Sir Garnet Wolseley (as he then was) with his own hands pinned to his breast the bit of ribbon from which hung the most coveted of medals, bearing the simple inscription, "Private Henry Hook, January 22nd and 23rd, 1879."

A. E. Bonser.

### AUTUMN SUNSHINE.\*

This warm, dry, dusty autumn, with no morning fog, and never a cloud in the sky—this light breeze blowing always from the north-east, and this dazzling sunshine—I know them all too well! They remind me of the tragic September of 1870.

We had the same sort of weather then—precisely the same—and while the greatness of France was crumbling about us the barometer stood at *beau fixe*. Once more Nature flaunted her indifference to the agitation of our ant-hill; and her mysterious calm affected us with a sense of irony and injury.

You need not shrug your shoulders, young folks! It was a frightful thing to awake in the morning, and to feel that as the white light filtered between the leaves of your shutters the invaders were marching on Paris. Above a city thrown into wild confusion by the preparations for defence—above citizens going hastily through the manual of arms—above the unnerved masses, intoxicating themselves with martial phrases and foolish hopes while every heart was really quivering with apprehension—the skies beamed and smiled and wore their most festal aspect. The radiant azure overhead seemed to put

the finishing touch to our consternation. How far away it all seems!

Scarcely any material trace is now left in Paris of that enormous disaster; but the folk of my generation have not forgotten it, and they never will. They think of the lost provinces and the mutilated frontier, and of that vast forfeiture so long endured—shall we say—alas! passively accepted? Through the still autumnal air breathing always from the east they seem to hear a cruel echo of the triumphant "*hoch!*" which they lift up over there upon glorious anniversaries. And the exceptional beauty of this belated summer, this clear, sunshiny month, render their memories more poignant and mournful than ever before.

For my own part, I am beset and besieged by them. All the old anguish comes back;—the distressing contrast between the imposing calm of Nature and the hideous confusion of war. I live over again the warm days—so exactly like these!—which I lived in the chaotic city.

Now I am at the Luxembourg, going through the exercise with my company, sweating in my pea-jacket with the metal buttons, awkwardly handling the heavy, old-fashioned musket altered into a rifle. The sky

<sup>1</sup> Private John Williams received the Cross afterwards at Gibraltar.

\* Translated for *The Living Age*.

is like pale-blue satin, and there is a flash of sunlight from every bayonet. Then I mount guard at the Porte d'Italie, where the sappers and miners are at work on the ramparts raising a cloud of gilded dust with every stroke of the pick-axe. It is very hot, and the bronze of the old-fashioned field pieces lying about amid the parched herbage of the slope, reflects the burning sunshine.

The old familiar buildings were relieved against the same background of implacable blue on the afternoon of the 4th of September, when, enraged by the news of the capitulation at Sedan, men with ropes round their waists, or clinging to tall ladders, tore down the imperial eagles and escutcheons. It was beautiful, beautiful weather still, that day when I saw on the Chaussée du Maine the miserable refugees from Châlons with their *képis* on hind-side before and placards with the word "*Coward*" fastened to their backs, dragged along by the infuriated populace.

One especially haunting memory is that of the suburbans who took refuge in the city just before it was invested. They came sadly in by the wide, magnificent boulevards—the streets lined with monuments. I have never in my life been so cut to the heart as by the flight of these unfortunate exiles through the luxurious town, bathed in the splendor of an autumn sunset.

A bright serenity was in the air; the white house-fronts took on a faint rose tint from the sinking orb; the gilded lettering of the signs fairly flamed. But amid all this fair display the long line of carts came on, down the middle of the hard, macadamized street. Some few were drawn by a staggering and half-starved horse, but for the most part the draught beast was a man—a poor, bent man, with a sunken chest and a strap round either arm-pit, pulling

with all his might, his head drooping, his hair fallen over his eyes. His wife pushed behind, and every child carried a bundle of some sort. The remnant of humble household goods was knocked rudely about in the jolting cart. A cage with some hens in it trembled on the top of a rolled-up mattress. An ancient table sprawled with its four legs in the air, and all the kitchen utensils rattled and shivered.

What misery! What rags and ruin! We ask ourselves with sinking hearts where these forlorn emigrants will find an asylum;—where the children will sleep; and the disappearing sun smiles mockingly. He is a *dilettante*! The grotesque caravans that thread the street are no concern of his. He is minding his own business and amusing himself in the sky. He sets a ruby in the midst of every blazing window-pane; and after him comes that yet finer artist, the twilight, diffusing over the pale, unseasonable blossoms of the city trees a wonderful tint of purple,—turning the white chestnut flowers rose pink.

Meanwhile the investment of Paris is being methodically and scientifically completed. The tranquil Moltke wipes his spectacles and gives his orders; and the heavy-hipped Germans aim at us the steel mouths of the Krupp guns. The king of Prussia rides across the Place d'Armes at Versailles, heedless of the imperious gesture of Girardon's Louis XIV., and in his lodging in the Rue des Reservoirs, Bismarck, in high content, sees the prestige of France floating away on the smoke of his pipe.

Out upon thee, autumn sunshine, who callest up the image of that man, who never smiled save upon our conquerors!

Yet once thou gavest us a ray of hope! Never didst thou shine more brilliantly than on the Bastille and the

Place de la Concorde, when four hundred thousand of us were drawn up under arms. Beleaguered Paris—a waste of stone—could scarce furnish a flower to stick in our gun-barrels. Yet we were all ready on that day to fight and to die; and our general, with his black moustaches and his pale, impassioned face, galloped past, acknowledging by a gallant wave of his gilded helmet our wild cries of "*Vive la France!*" Our enthusiasm was vain. Nobody knew what to do with so much loyalty and good-will!

It was glorious weather. Come on, scum of the Parisian streets, disguised as soldiers! Mount guard on the ramparts! *Rat-a-plan, plan-plan, plan!* And the "*Marseillaise!*" And the drinking-bouts, where your ardor will evaporate and you will talk politics till you are completely stultified! And the magnificent autumn will slip away, and you will get used to regarding the war as an open-air perform-

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ance, rather amusing, on the whole,—in which you take part at thirty sous a day! So it will go on, till of a sudden winter will come with freezing nights, and tramping through the mud,—and—starvation. How well one might have fought in the October sunshine! But now, stifled with fog, scourged with snow,—one can only gape at treason! All is lost! When the final crash comes there will be nobody left in Paris but fevered and exasperated citizens ripe for civil war!

You torment me, cruel sun! You recall only sinister dates—disasters which have never been repaired, insults which have never been avenged. 'Twas but yesterday the lagging dog-star quite prostrated the army of our autumn memories,—that army of which nothing is now required save reviews and parades! Vell yourself in mist! We are vexed and ashamed. A cloudy sky would better suit our melancholy humor!

*François Coppée.*

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## IN NOVEMBER.

Seant light have we today,—the pale slant rays  
Withdrawn in cloudfolds fall the earth to cheer.  
The winds moan requiems o'er the sombre bier  
Whereon lie hidden all our golden days.  
Whence are the warblers flown whose silenced lays  
Erst ranged at break of morning sweet and clear?  
A little band of snowbirds twitter here,  
And fly before us in a shy amaze.  
The sheaves are garnered,—ruddy fruits and sweet  
Are gathered in with patient thrift and care;  
In fresh tilled fields the green of winter wheat  
Beguiles us, spring-like, but the woods are bare;  
The pallid sun scarce lights the cold, dark sky,—  
And on the hillside umber shadows lie.

*C. D.*

## THE ANGLO-GERMAN AGREEMENT.

A recess full of serious preoccupations has been brightened by the game of speculation which has raged fast and furious round that *dame voilée* of Downing Street—the Anglo-German Agreement. In the smoking-room of the St. James's Club, diplomats assured one another mysteriously that something important was in the wind as far back as the middle of August. Later on, in the dining-room at the Travellers', they collated the growing irregularity of Mr. Eric Barrington's dinner hour with the daily and protracted visits of Count Hatzfeldt to the Foreign Office, and became more than ever convinced that serious business was brewing. What was it? Actual guesses were few, for the scope of conjecture was limited by a professional knowledge of the possibilities, or rather the impossibilities, of the political situation. Outside, however, was a public which was hampered by no such limitation. On its behalf, the Pall Mall Gazette took a hand in the game at the beginning of last month by declaring, on the authority of "a source in which we have every confidence," that the mysterious agreement was nothing less than "an offensive and defensive alliance." The *chargé d'affaires* of a Great Power who caught sight of the contents bill of the temerarious newspaper as he was hurrying to catch the Pullman express to Brighton on that sensational afternoon, still bewails to his friends that, in his anxiety to pierce the mystery, he forgot to ask the bawling *camelot* for change of the half-crown he threw to him.

Thenceforth every day brought its crop of guesses. An "absolutely trustworthy authority" declared that the main point of the agreement was an

understanding as to spheres of railway influence in China, the details of which he elaborately set forth. Others who modestly abstained from advertising their veracity, announced, in turn, a compact to abolish the mixed Tribunals in Egypt, an arrangement as to German territorial acquisitions in Asia Minor, and a bargain with regard to Delagoa Bay. Some said that the Delagoa Bay agreement involved the occupation of the whole province of Lourenço Marques by England, while others limited it to the purchase of the railway by Mr. Cecil Rhodes. Then we heard of a settlement of the question of the Hinterland of the Gold Coast and Togo; of a combination between Mr. Cecil Rhodes and a syndicate of Hamburg bankers to exploit Damaraland; of the purchase of Mozambique and a coaling station at Lisbon, together with the hire of a Portuguese army by Great Britain, for a trifle of £80,000,000; of the abandonment of German opposition to a British lease of a strip of territory on the Eastern frontier of the Congo Free State uniting Uganda with Nyassaland, and finally of a treaty by which Germany recognized a British protectorate on the Nile, and yielded to this country a free hand in Africa, south of the Zambesi, in return for a coaling station at or near Delagoa Bay and a British guarantee of the Treaty of Frankfort.

Not one of these guesses bore the test of a close scrutiny. The "offensive and defensive alliance" theory was clearly an inference from Mr. Chamberlain's "long spoon" speech, and nothing more. It was a plausible suggestion at a time when the struggle with Russia over the Niuchwang Railway Extension Loan seemed to bear

daily testimony to the wisdom of the Colonial Secretary's new Foreign Policy. Such an alliance, however, could only be against Russia, and no one who knew anything of the international situation believed for a moment that Germany was disposed to enter a combination of that kind. Of the other theories some were transparently absurd, some were too simple to account for the number and length of the interviews between Count Hatzfeldt and Mr. Balfour, and others dealt with questions in which Portugal, and not Germany, was primarily interested.

Nevertheless, one of these conjectures has managed to survive, and to-day most people are satisfied that, in some way or other, the agreement is concerned with a transference of Delagoa Bay to England. It is true that this theory is open to many of the objections which have proved fatal to its competitors. If Great Britain likes to purchase Delagoa Bay she has a double treaty right to do so, and need not ask Germany's permission. If, for some occult reason, she has chosen to conciliate susceptibilities in the matter, the operation is not one which requires prolonged negotiations. Moreover, the latter hypothesis still leaves the public in the dark as to German compensations, and hence affords no explanation of the agreement as such. On the other hand, the theory is fathered by the German semi-official press, and, with Herr Busch's revelations of how those organs are managed fresh in our minds, we cannot well afford to pooh-pooh what they say.

Now, from all this discussion three facts detach themselves very clearly. In the first place, the agreement can have nothing to do with a change of British foreign policy on the "long spoon" principle, for not only is the Emperor of Germany anxious to main-

tain cordial relations with Russia, but our own difficulties with that Power are disappearing before negotiations which promise a permanent and mutually satisfactory settlement of the Far Eastern question. In the second place, it is clear that the transaction between the two Powers is of exceptional magnitude, complexity and urgency, for it can be for no small or negligible question that Ministers and Ambassadors confer for hours together, day after day, at the Foreign Office, at a time of year usually devoted to holiday-making. The third fact is the statement of the German Press with regard to Delagoa Bay. I have just pointed out that this statement does not satisfactorily account for the exceptional features of the negotiations to which it relates. If, however, we treat it as a mere glimpse of the negotiations, a clue to the general nature of the agreement arrived at, our difficulty will at once vanish. Thus, if we read "Portuguese African Colonies" for "Delagoa Bay," everything is explained. In that case we have a problem which, in magnitude, complexity, and urgency, exactly accords with the external features of the negotiations which have so aroused public curiosity.

Guesses, like prophecies, are best when they are based on actual knowledge. I am afraid I must confess that I owe my inference as to the nature of the Anglo-German negotiations less to any ratiocinating process than to what the police call "information received." The new Anglo-German Agreement is, in fact, an arrangement resulting from certain negotiations with Portugal, by which the two Great Powers divide between them a right of pre-emption in regard to all the Portuguese colonies in Africa. It defines the territorial sphere of each of the two contracting Powers in those colonies, provides for the consideration

to be paid as and when the colonies are alienated by Portugal, assesses the proportions of the purchase money or leasehold premiums for which each of the Powers will be liable, and settles a multitude of minor questions connected with the eventual transfers. In short, Great Britain and Germany have become joint heirs to the estates of the Portuguese crown in Africa, and, while undertaking the reversion in common, they have prudently provided against any clashing of interests when the time arrives for entering upon and dividing their heritage.

The circumstances which have led to this important transaction will be readily divined by any one who has followed, however slightly, the recent political history of Portugal. That country is, to all intents and purposes, in a state of hopeless bankruptcy. Year after year her finances show a deficit which neither economy nor repudiation can diminish. Since her default in the matter of two-thirds of the interest on her external debt, she has found the European money market closed against her. Such is the distrust with which she is regarded that she was actually unable a little time ago to float a supplemental issue of bonds of the Tobacco Loan—which is the only loan on which full interest is still paid—although she protested that the operation was for the benefit of her bondholders. Every attempt to effect an arrangement with her creditors has failed. Meanwhile, taxation is mounting up in the country, trade is languishing, and discontent is everywhere rampant. If the country is to be saved from a ruinous economic and political crisis, steps must be speedily taken to place its finances on a sound basis.

How is this to be effected? It is too late to try a *régime* of cheeseparing economy, even if the Lusitanian administration were capable of such a

thing, for to starve the public services would be quite as disastrous as to further increase taxation. Portugal requires two things—a fresh supply of capital with which to re-establish her credit and put her house in order, and a permanent reduction in her annual expenditure which would enable her to keep straight in the future. It has long been clear to every student of this problem that there is only one way in which these needs can be adequately satisfied. Portugal must realize some of her assets, preferentially those which are costly luxuries to her. Among such assets her colonies occupy a prominent place. The majority of them involve the Motherland in a heavy annual expenditure, which, together with the cost of the Central Colonial Administration in Lisbon and the naval charges connected with it, go far towards accounting for the deficit in the national budget. Hence their alienation either by sale or lease would help very considerably to balance the budget, and as a high price could be easily obtained for any of them, such an alienation would at the same time provide the country with the fresh capital it so urgently needs.

Unfortunately the Portuguese have rather more than their fair share of the Jingo spirit—which is, perhaps, explained by the fact that eighty per cent. of the population are illiterates—and they are especially tetchy on the question of parting with their colonies. The Republicans foment this feeling to serve their own ends, so that, on more than one occasion, seditious demonstrations have been produced by the bare rumor that the Government was meditating the sale of some oversea possession of the Crown. Nevertheless the inevitability of some such transaction has of late years impressed itself more and more on the minds of Portuguese statesmen, es-

pecially since it has become clear that the alternative of permanently disordered finances was likely in the end to prove even more disturbing to the internal peace of the kingdom.

It was not, however, the general financial situation alone which lately brought this question once more into the field of practical politics. About a year ago it leaked out that the arbitrators in the Delagoa Bay Railway dispute had practically made up their minds against Portugal, and were only awaiting certain data from South Africa to mulct her in swinging damages. This was serious news. Portugal could not pay the rumored award unless she negotiated a loan, and this was impossible while all the money markets of the world remained closed against her. On the other hand, if she did not pay she would probably find herself involved in a quarrel with Great Britain, who might, perhaps, seize the railway, or even something more, in satisfaction of her colonies. In these circumstances, informal negotiations were set on foot in London, and the good offices of Berlin were solicited. Count Burnay, the well-known Lisbon banker, and Major Mousinho de Albuquerque, the Governor of Mozambique, both seem to have been concerned in the *pourparlers*. At first they led to no result. Germany did not wish to facilitate in any way an arrangement which might place England in possession of Delagoa Bay, and at the same time she could not do anything actively to prevent it. England, for her part, could not discuss the matter with Germany, whose *locus standi* in the matter she did not recognize, and she could not well agree to forego her claims. Meanwhile, apprehensions in Lisbon became deepened by the course taken by the Hispano-American war. The reflection that at one time Spain might have sold Cuba to the United States

for £20,000,000, and that if Portugal by accident should quarrel with another State, the fate of her colonies would assuredly be the same as that of the Spanish West Indies, rendered the King more than ever anxious to settle the Delagoa Bay question. The probability that award of the arbitrators would be delivered during the month of October introduced an element of urgency into the affair, and Count Burnay was once again sent flitting from Lisbon to London and thence to Berlin. This time the question was posed in a form which rendered it possible for the British and German Governments to take counsel together. They were asked, as powers friendly to Portugal, to take into consideration, not the Delagoa Bay difficulty alone, but the general financial embarrassments of Portugal to which that difficulty threatened to make a serious addition. Portugal sought the advice and assistance of the two Powers, and on this basis formal negotiations were set on foot, which resulted in the agreements already referred to. The first result of these agreements will be the leasing of Delagoa Bay by Great Britain.

The colonies dealt with in the two treaties consist of the provinces of Mozambique and Lourença Marques on the east coast, Angola, Ambriz, Benguela, Mossamedes and Congo on the west, and the small but ancient settlement of Guinea on the northwest, the whole possessing an area of 914,000 square miles, or rather more than seven and a-half times that of the United Kingdom. In the palmy days of the slave trade they were flourishing settlements, but since the beginning of the present century, when England undertook the campaign against slavery, and Portugal, weakened by her home convulsions, was unable to give much attention to colonial administration, their decline

has known no interruption. Their hinterlands became abandoned to the natives, who at one time drove the Portuguese into the sea at Lourenço Marques and Sofola. In vain the Conselho Ultramarino of Lisbon devised the most elaborate schemes of colonization. The people had lost their energy and their spirit of conquest. The British and Dutch in the south pushed into their derelict hinterlands as far as the Zambezi, and beyond to Lake Nyassa, cutting for ever their communications between east and west. When other sources of ill-luck were exhausted, they plunged into quarrels with foreign Powers. Their quarrel with England in 1890 shook their authority all over the east coast, and their high-handed confiscation of the McMurdo Railway in Delagoa Bay in 1889 will eventually cost them the finest harbor and the most hopeful port in Africa. Nothing they have touched of late years has succeeded. They have started Chartered Companies with large powers and splendid concessions, only to see them fall one after another. The sole companies which have succeeded are those which, like the Companhia de Mozambique and the Beira Railway Company, are financed and managed by foreigners. Delagoa Bay, the natural port of the Transvaal goldfields, which ought to be the busiest town on the south-eastern coast, has been so grossly mismanaged that during the first half of the present year the imports decreased by 100,000 tons, and trade is now seeking in preference the remoter outlets of Durban, East London and Port Elizabeth. A sleepier history has been that of the west coast, but it has travelled on the same lines. And yet all these colonies are rich in natural resources, and they possess a trade of considerable volume, and distinctly progressive. If their budgets always show deficits, it is not because the revenue

decreases, but because of some principle of Portuguese finance, which seems to require that the expenditure of a public office shall never allow itself to lose its start of the income. The Portuguese might, perhaps, still turn their African colonies to account if they had money to sink in them. Having no money, no energy and no luck, their wisest plan is to get rid of them. Already the English, Germans and Dutch are on their frontiers, while within the colonies themselves the strenuous foreigner is creating for himself interests, liens and claims, the political possibilities of which, under a weak and corrupt administration, are incalculable.

Whether the new agreement between Portugal on the one hand and Great Britain and Germany on the other, in regard to these colonies, is eventually sanctioned or denounced by the Portuguese people, the result will, of course, be the same in the end. Nor will the separate agreement between Great Britain and Germany be at all affected if the Lisbon Cabinet is compelled to withdraw. In holding fast to her transmarine dependencies, Portugal is fighting against a mysterious but pitiless destiny, which is working like a pestilence among all the people of southern Europe. Empire has passed from them all, and the splendid memories of Don Henrique and Vasco de Gama, of Vincent Pinzon and of Pedro Cabral will no more save Angola and Mozambique than it saved the Indies and Brazil. When the inevitable crash comes the British and German rights will still stand. So far as Great Britain is concerned, a right of pre-emption to all the Portuguese possessions south of the Zambezi already exists under Article VII. of the Treaty of 1891. This cannot be revoked; but even if the wider pre-emption now conceded is denounced it will exist in practice so long as Great

Britain and Germany hold to their own agreement. That agreement makes them partners in South Africa, controlling everything below the sixth parallel, except the southern border of the Congo Free State. It is a magnificent sphere of influence. When we add to it Uganda, the Soudan, Egypt, the Niger Territories and the Cameroons, it covers more than half, and that certainly the best half, of Africa. Mr. Labouchere will have to bethink himself the next time he feels inclined to claim Lord Salisbury as a Little Englander.

Apart from its territorial features, the Anglo-German agreement possesses advantages which are none the less solid because they are not specifically enumerated in it. Chief among these will be the pacificatory influence it will exert on Cape politics, and on the relations of the Transvaal with the Suzerain power. President Kruger has nourished not a few mischievous illusions with regard to the attitude of Germany towards the South African Republic. These he will now have to abandon. It will make no difference to his rights under the London Convention, for Great Britain has no idea of violating them in any way; but it is to be hoped that it will make a great difference so far as the good and equitable government of the Transvaal is concerned, and especially in regard to the Uitlanders who, whether English, German or French, are all equally dissatisfied with the reaction-

ary régime to which they are subjected. The Anglo-German agreement has given rise to some observations in the German press on this subject which will afford salutary reading to President Kruger during his leisure. Dr. Leyds has probably ascertained by this time that these observations are not altogether irresponsible.

Another merit of the agreement is that it publicly affirms the cordial relations of Great Britain and Germany, and consolidates them on a broad basis of common interests. Despite Mr. Chamberlain, the English people are no more desirous to-day of contracting what President Jefferson called "entangling alliances," than they were twenty years ago. Lord Salisbury follows out a wiser policy, and one which is calculated to prove just as effectual in the end, in not only cultivating friendly relations with all the Powers, but in endeavoring to fortify such relations by a community of material interests. Something of the kind has already been done in the Siamese Agreement with France, and it is no fault of ours if what Gambetta called "*l'alliance Française*" does not hold good to-day in Egypt. If the same principle could be extended to our relations with Russia in Asia, the peace of the world would be spared one of its most fearsome spectres. Meanwhile we may hail the new Anglo-German agreement as a veritable triumph of this policy.

Fortnightly Review.

*Diplomaticus.*

#### VICTOR AND CAZIRE.\*

In the name of suffering humanity, why is such a book as this inflicted on a generation groaning under rubbish

of its own manufacture? Its own learned editor raises this question, and I may be excused from echoing it a

\* "Original Poetry." By Victor and Cazire (Percy Bysshe Shelley and Elizabeth Shelley). Edited by

Richard Garnett, C.B., LL.D. Published by John Lane.

trifle more forcibly. "In proportion," says he, "to the habitual excellence of Shelley's and Coleridge's work after the full development of their powers, is its inferiority in 'the ages of ignorance.' Shelley's beginnings are far the more unpromising, and every admirer of his genius must have frequently wished that the whole of his poetical production prior to 'Queen Mab' could be bestowed as 'alms for oblivion.' Seldom have the beginnings of a poet been so destitute of merit as his early lyrics. Why, then, it may be asked, retrieve any more of them from obscurity?"

"It may be asked?" Nay, it *must* be asked. Heaven knows we suffer severely enough nowadays from the early efforts of the British Muse, which we are enticed to study on the ground that in some obscure way they help to explain Chaucer. As a matter of fact, they do not help to explain Chaucer (who happened to be a poet of genius, and whose genius happens to be the one thing that makes his poetry worth reading). But they have at any rate a philological interest. Now there is no philological interest in the fact, if fact it be, that Shelley once wrote

My high-strung energies are *sank*,  
and, for the rest, a perusal of the  
verses in this volume no more helps  
our understanding of Shelley than it  
would help us to know that, some  
years before this composition, he had  
called a horse a gee-gee. That be-  
tween 1813 ("Queen Mab") and 1815  
("Alastor") Shelley underwent a sec-  
ond birth and mysteriously attained to  
the divine gift of song is a fact as well  
known as that before 1813 he wrote  
rubbish. Too much of this rubbish  
(Dr. Garnett admits) has been pre-  
served. Why (he asks) increase the  
public stock of rubbish by retrieving  
any more of it from obscurity?

The question (he proceeds to say)

"appears pertinent." I should think it: did!—and only wish that half as much could be said for his answer, which amounts to this: that those who follow his argument to its logical end, and conclude that a superfluous heap of rubbish is in itself a capital reason against the addition of fresh rubbish, are "the uninitiated." Thirty-nine years ago Dr. Garnett, "in the exercise of what was then his ordinary duty," placed a newly-purchased periodical entitled Stockdale's Budget on the shelves of the library of the British Museum. In this very scandalous periodical he discovered that in 1810 Shelley and another, under the names of something-or-other and Cazire, had published a thin volume of verse, and that the book had been destroyed after a hundred copies or so had been put into circulation. "Nothing can more conclusively show the wisdom of purchasing everything for the national library, however apparently unpromising." I fail to see the cogency of the argument. "Not only do we owe our knowledge of the very existence of Shelley's first published volume of verse to this unsavory publication, but without it the book might have turned up and passed from hand to hand without any suspicion of Shelley's authorship of anything in it occurring to any one." Well, and what then? Would any one, even so, have been a penny the worse? Let me point out—

1. That the verses it contains are admittedly rubbish.
2. That they cannot help a single hu-  
man being to understand Shelley  
a whit the more, or to love any  
noble thing he wrote a whit the  
better.
3. That the utmost they can prove is  
that Shelley did at one time write  
worse than any one had hitherto  
suspected.

If these be conclusive arguments for

purchasing every scrap of printed matter for the national library, however apparently unpromising, I can only say, with the American, that I disremember the beginning of the quotation, but it ends "and their money are soon parted." And, even so, we want a conclusive argument or two for the wisdom of reprinting the stuff, especially after its editor's confession that "fervently as we hoped that a copy might one day be found, we must now hope with equal fervor that no one may ever find another."

The wonder to me is that persons who wanted this volume so badly did not turn to and compose it for themselves. It would have been so very easy!—or at any rate, Victor's (that is to say, Shelley's, and the more important) part would have been so very easy! Here is a specimen—

And ah! poor — has felt all this horror,  
Full long the fallen victim contended with fate;  
Till, a destitute outcast, abandoned to sorrow,  
She sought her babe's food at her ruiner's gate—  
Another had charmed the remorseless betrayer,  
He turned laughing aside from her moans and her prayer,  
She said nothing, but wringing the wet from her hair,  
Crossed the dark mountain side,  
tho' the hour it was late.

"The book," says its editor, "enlarges our conception of Shelley's range at this early period, both of thought and of metrical practice."

And ah! poor — has felt all this horror,  
Full long the fallen victim contended with fate;  
Till, a destitute outcast, abandoned to sorrow,

She said nothing, but wringing the wet from her hair. . . .

And so forth—how it "enlarges our conception" of Shelley's "range of metrical practice!" For another taste—

Then stay thy swift steps mid the dark mountain heather  
Tho' chill blow the wind *and severe is the weather.* . . .

For another—

All was now silent—and over the tomb,  
Thicker, deeper, was swiftly extended a gloom,  
Adolphus in horror sank down on the stone,  
And his fleeting soul fled with a harrowing groan.

The "initiated," it appears, hail the recovery of this stuff as "the final chapter of a romance, and a bibliographical event as rare as, according to Petrarch, the appearance of Laura in heaven":

Quod optanti divōm promittere nemo auderet.

I am not poking fun—these are Dr. Garnett's very own words; and Dr. Garnett, who is a learned man and has translated Petrarch, knows the full dignity of the comparison. "They should have wiped it up and said no more about it," was My Uncle Toby's excellent advice on a similar occasion; but this would never do for the "initiated." And so the next edition of Shelley's Poetical Works will doubtless be adorned by these effusions, which never deserved a place in the Poet's Corner of a provincial newspaper. And so we honor the memory of a great man!

To speak seriously—for really, when learned men behave in this fashion, the business becomes serious—the arguments advanced in Dr. Garnett's preface are naught. A child could play skittles with them. A child could detect, for instance, the incon-

sistency of proclaiming in one breath that Shelley's juvenile experiments are best forgotten, and in the next that you are proposing to hand a few more down for remembrance. But in truth, behind this fence of argument lies the doctrine (to be hidden until some inconvenient person with a sense of logic forces it into the open) that the public has a right to nose into anything and everything that a great man would keep hidden—the secrets of his laboratory as well as of his private life—and to drag into light whatever he had the good sense to be ashamed of. Shelley *was* ashamed of these poems. A child could demonstrate that he *must have been* ashamed of them; but he actually saved the child this easy task by destroying the volumes containing them. There is consequently no shade of doubt as to what Shelley would have thought of this officious reprint. We are violating the wishes, without (it is admitted) increasing the fame of the great man we profess to honor. And why are

The Speaker.

we doing this? In order that a dozen or two dozen of people may gratify a vulgar itch to "know something more about Shelley." And who are these persons? What calling do they follow? Where do they live? How have they hitherto justified their existence, that they should claim this right of pawing the verses which Shelley fondly hoped he had destroyed? Do they propose to be Shelleys? And, if so, is it thus they propose to pick up Shelley's secret?

No; this ignoble curiosity is just the urban or suburban equivalent of that taste for tattle which sets old women's tongues wagging at country tea-tables. It tricks itself out as a taste for literature (save the mark!). It is really a denial of taste in literature. The men who profess it do no good to literature, and never will; for they lack that sense of decent reverence which is the note of a liberal mind. It is pitiable that their appetite should enlist a scholar such as Dr. Garnett in its ministry.

A. T. Quiller-Couch.

#### STRIFE COMES WITH MANHOOD AND WAKING WITH DAY.

Doth only pity move us that the child,  
Grown to a man, shall man's sad wisdom learn—  
Shall know defeat and loss, and, though he yearn  
For what is best, shall be by worst beguiled;  
Shall taste of wild despair, of hope more wild;  
Shall eager for the front of battle burn,  
Yet fall before the foe he most did spurn,  
His gilded harness broken and defiled?  
Fair flaunts the flag that battle never knew,  
But all eyes turn from banners fresh and brave  
To colors stained and torn, shot through and through,  
Because round them the changing battle drove.  
And he that never desperate stood at bay  
Knows not the victor's joy at close of day!

Argosy.

M. A. M. Marks.

## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Colonel Roosevelt is to tell the story of the "Rough Riders" in a series of six sketches, which will be published in Scribner's Magazine, beginning in the January number.

Sir Edward Hamilton, the author of a monograph on Mr. Gladstone, just published by Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, was formerly Mr. Gladstone's private secretary, and his sketch of the great statesman embodies the results of close observation and intimate acquaintance.

The articles which the Duke of Argyll wrote for The Nineteenth Century upon Mr. Herbert Spencer's biological views, and which were reprinted in The Living Age, are announced for publication by Mr. John Murray, under the title "Organic Evolution Cross-examined."

Apropos of Mr. Morley's agreement to write the biography of Mr. Gladstone, some one has thought fit to recall the fact that the final volumes of the Life of Sir Robert Peel, who died in 1850, are only just coming from the press. Not less than one hundred thousand letters await Mr. Morley's examination, to say nothing of other material.

The plan of selling expensive books on the instalment plan, through the agency of newspapers, which has become sufficiently familiar among us, is being extensively adopted in England. The London Times led the way, with sets of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," advertised in the strenuous manner of American newspapers; and now one of the leading Church papers is about to offer in the same way a well-known Biblical commentary.

The English reading public is beginning to find out, what American readers long ago ascertained, that the reading matter in the very cheap and widely circulated magazines is mostly by unknown writers and of inferior quality. There is really no excuse for this, as the large circulations would justify generous expenditure for contributions.

Harper & Bros. will be the American publishers of the "Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett" to which reference was recently made in this department. The correspondence will fill two volumes, and it is said to include every letter which passed between the two from their first acquaintance until their marriage, with the exception of a single letter, which was destroyed by mutual consent.

The October number of the Scottish Geographical Magazine is wholly devoted to Antarctic exploration. Sir John Murray makes a strong appeal for half a million dollars for the purpose of organizing a British Antarctic expedition to co-operate with those from Belgium and Germany. Other articles present a history of Antarctic discovery and summarize what is known of those regions.

Readers of M. Imlay Taylor's spirited romances "On the Red Staircase" and "An Imperial Lover" will be interested in the announcement by A. C. McClurg & Co. of another historical story from his pen. This time, however, it is not Russia, but America, which is the theatre of action, as is shown by the title, "A Yankee Volunteer." The story is of the revolution-

ary period, and the hero is a young captain in the Colonial army.

The lately-published memoir of Mr. Raikes, who was postmaster general in Lord Salisbury's first ministry, tells a pleasing tale of Lord Macaulay. Mr. Raikes sat next Lord Macaulay at a banquet, and was told by him that he had recently sent his character to a graphologist, who began his forecast with the statement, "This young man, if he takes pains, may succeed in conversation." As Lord Macaulay's reputation as the most fluent talker in England was then well established, this was rather diverting.

We are too near the incidents of the war with Spain to view them in historical perspective, or fully to appreciate their significance; but whoever wants a carefully-prepared contemporary narrative of these incidents, written with fairness, accuracy and a due sense of proportion, and in an attractive style will find it in Mr. Charles Morris's "The War with Spain" (J. B. Lippincott Co., publishers). The reader who is confused rather than helped by fragmentary newspaper and magazine articles will turn with satisfaction to this connected and coherent narrative.

In the "Life of Bishop How," recently published in England, there is an interesting reference to Tennyson's poem, "Crossing the Bar." The Bishop, and Dr. Butler, Master of Trinity, had a discussion over the question whether the lines:

"When that which drew from out the  
boundless deep  
Turns again home"

referred to the tide or to life. Dr. Butler was of the latter opinion, and was able, by quotations from other of Tennyson's poems, to convince Bishop How. When the question was re-

ferred to Tennyson, however, the poet replied that it was the tide that was meant.

The series of volumes upon American Statesmen (Houghton, Mifflin & Co., publishers,) will be completed when the volumes on Chase, Charles Francis Adams, Sumner and Stevens, to which reference was made in this department a few weeks ago, are published. Taken together, they constitute an historical work of unusual importance, five volumes of which relate to the great figures of the Revolutionary period, five to the constructive period which followed, six to the Jeffersonian Democracy, eight to domestic politics, especially to the tariff and slavery, and seven to the civil war. The unity of the series will be emphasized and its value greatly enhanced by a supplementary volume containing a topical index to the whole series, with a bibliography. This has been prepared by Mr. Theodore C. Smith.

It is not given to every man to understand the language of the wood-folk, and few men can claim, in telling a rabbit story, that though they "may translate from rabbit into English," they repeat nothing that the rabbits "did not say." Yet this is what Ernest Seton Thompson asserts in the rare collection of studies and sketches to which he has given the title "Wild Animals I Have Known." (Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.) And he more than makes good the claim. The text is inspired by a most minute and loving knowledge of the homes and habits of animals, and the incidents are exquisitely and touchingly told. As for the illustrations scattered along on every page, they have a rare charm that is often droll and gay, often very pitiful, but always faithful to the characteristics or the emotions of the little wild lives that are portrayed.

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